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Malcolm Rutherford on Sean O'Casey

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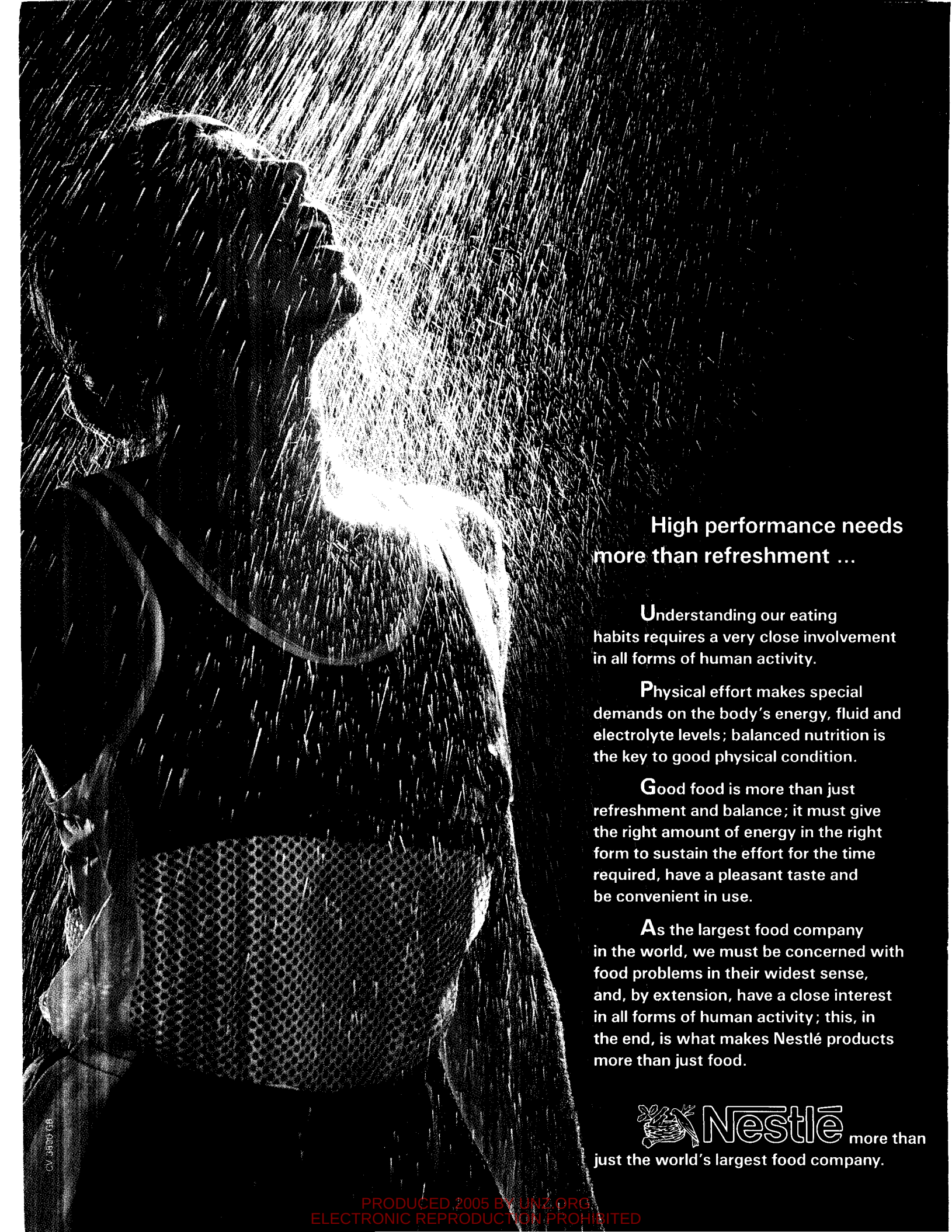

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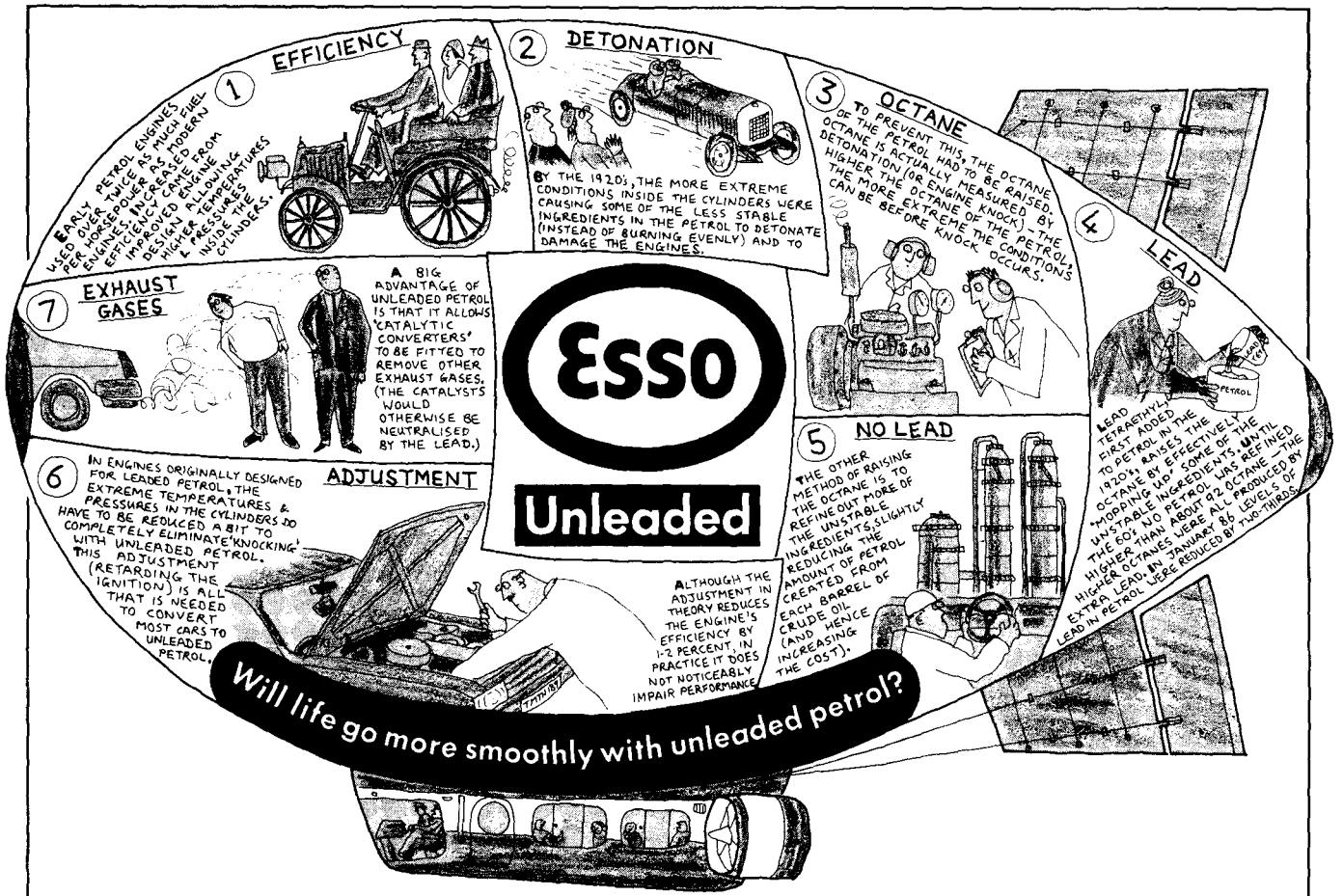
1 EFFICIENCY
EARLY PETROL ENGINES USED OVER TWICE AS MUCH FUEL PER HORSEPOWER AS MODERN ENGINES. INCREASED EFFICIENCY CAME FROM IMPROVED ENGINE DESIGN ALLOWING HIGHER TEMPERATURES & PRESSURES INSIDE THE CYLINDERS.
2 DETONATION
BY THE 1920's, THE MORE EXTREME CONDITIONS INSIDE THE CYLINDERS WERE CAUSING SOME OF THE LESS STABLE INGREDIENTS IN THE PETROL TO DETONATE (INSTEAD OF BURNING EVENLY) AND TO DAMAGE THE ENGINES.
3 OCTANE
TO PREVENT THIS, THE OCTANE OF THE PETROL HAD TO BE RAISED. OCTANE IS ACTUALLY MEASURED BY DETONATION (OR ENGINE KNOCK) - THE HIGHER THE OCTANE OF THE PETROL, THE MORE EXTREME THE CONDITIONS CAN BE BEFORE KNOCK OCCURS.
4 LEAD
LEAD TETRAETHYL WAS FIRST ADDED TO PETROL IN THE 1920's. IT RAISED THE OCTANE BY EFFECTIVELY "MOPPING UP" SOME OF THE UNSTABLE INGREDIENTS. UNTIL THE 60's NO PETROL WAS REFINED HIGHER THAN ABOUT 92 OCTANE - THE HIGHER OCTANES WERE ALL PRODUCED BY EXTRA LEAD. IN JANUARY 86 LEVELS OF LEAD IN PETROL WERE REDUCED BY TWO-THIRDS.
5 NO LEAD
THE OTHER METHOD OF RAISING THE OCTANE IS TO REFINE OUT MORE OF THE UNSTABLE INGREDIENTS, SLIGHTLY REDUCING THE AMOUNT OF PETROL CREATED FROM EACH BARREL OF CRUDE OIL (AND HENCE INCREASING THE COST).
6 ADJUSTMENT
IN ENGINES ORIGINALLY DESIGNED FOR LEADED PETROL, THE EXTREME TEMPERATURES & PRESSURES IN THE CYLINDERS DO HAVE TO BE REDUCED A BIT TO COMPLETELY ELIMINATE 'KNOCKING' WITH UNLEADED PETROL. THIS ADJUSTMENT (RETARDING THE IGNITION) IS ALL THAT IS NEEDED TO CONVERT MOST CARS TO UNLEADED PETROL.
ALTHOUGH THE ADJUSTMENT IN THEORY REDUCES THE ENGINE'S EFFICIENCY BY 1-2 PERCENT, IN PRACTICE IT DOES NOT NOTICEABLY IMPAIR PERFORMANCE.
7 EXHAUST GASES
A BIG ADVANTAGE OF UNLEADED PETROL IS THAT IT ALLOWS 'CATALYTIC CONVERTERS' TO BE FITTED TO REMOVE OTHER EXHAUST GASES. (THE CATALYSTS WOULD OTHERWISE BE NEUTRALISED BY THE LEAD.)
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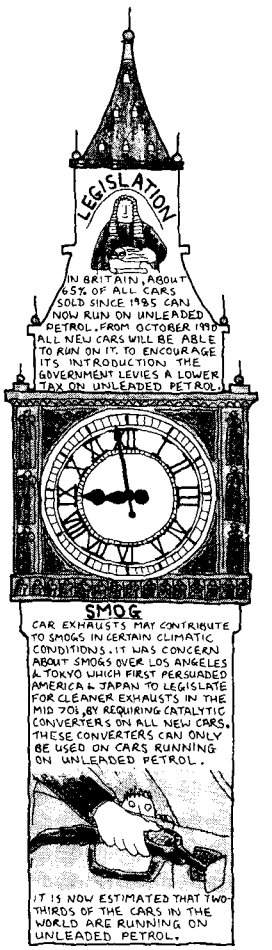
LEGISLATION
IN BRITAIN, ABOUT 65% OF ALL CARS SOLD SINCE 1985 CAN NOW RUN ON UNLEADED PETROL. FROM OCTOBER 1990 ALL NEW CARS WILL BE ABLE TO RUN ON IT. TO ENCOURAGE ITS INTRODUCTION THE GOVERNMENT LEVIES A LOWER TAX ON UNLEADED PETROL.
SMOG
CAR EXHAUSTS MAY CONTRIBUTE TO SMOGS IN CERTAIN CLIMATIC CONDITIONS. IT WAS CONCERN ABOUT SMOGS OVER LOS ANGELES & TOKYO WHICH FIRST PERSUADED AMERICA & JAPAN TO LEGISLATE FOR CLEANER EXHAUSTS IN THE MID 70's, BY REQUIRING CATALYTIC CONVERTERS ON ALL NEW CARS. THESE CONVERTERS CAN ONLY BE USED ON CARS RUNNING ON UNLEADED PETROL.
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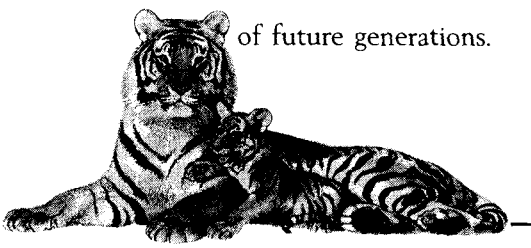

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George Webb

The New Wave

Japan in London

LET NO ONE lightly disregard the judgment of London taxi-drivers —sceptical individualists to a man, but generally fair. Ask them who are the rudest foreigners they come across, and they will provide a range of answers: a typical short list, in an order dictated by recent experiences, may include French, Arabs, and Nigerians. And who are the most courteous? Here there is no competition: the Japanese are first, the rest nowhere.

Though this tribute is undoubtedly deserved, and the politeness of the London Japanese is an asset hardly to be exaggerated, the businessmen among them are by no means always easy for British counterparts to deal with. The Japanese style of negotiation, with its ambivalent probing at the start, with its repeated referrals to Japan, with its marked preference for face-to-face meetings rather than exchanges of documents or even telephone calls, indeed with its very courtesies, can be profoundly disconcerting. Perhaps it is relevant that the two languages are constructed on wholly different lines—ours more inflected, theirs more nuanced—and this perhaps colours our respective modes of thought.

However, once a relationship of trust is established, a surprising truth emerges: the Japanese in business, contrary to popular supposition, are motivated by something more subtle, more reassuring, than mere desire for profit. A London chartered surveyor who handles major property transactions regards them as model clients, and outstandingly responsive to moral obligation, which, once incurred, they honour even when a more attractive deal suggests itself elsewhere. They are not natural gazumpers.

If courtesy and commercial dependability are impressions that the London Japanese project, it is no bad image—and it stands up well to sceptical analysis. Thus the impact on the taxi-driver stems from various causes, including respect for the London taxi system, which the Japanese consider better than their own, with more commodious vehicles, more knowledgeable drivers, and cheaper fares. Add to this their ingrained courtesy, less-than-confident English, and natural preference for self-effacing conformity, for blending with the local scene. Given these preconditions, it is likely that unseemly argument about the route (every cabby's bane) will arise, or the tip be overlooked? Again, the favourable impact on the chartered surveyor reflects typical Japanese adherence to the cautious long-range view, whereby no immediate advantage, like snatching a short-term tactical opportunity, is justified if a foreign contact's future usefulness, or a Japanese firm's reputation, is put at risk.

Still, as an insular people, how the British do enjoy labelling foreigners—the brash American, the wily Levantine, the amorous Latin, the inscrutable Chinese! Only when the French call *us* perfidious do we discount the applicability of such facile, all-embracing epithets; at best a substitute for thought, at worst a vehicle for prejudice. When we categorise the Japanese as *polite, reliable, industrious,* the label is not so much mistaken as inadequate. They are a complex people, more variegated and individualistic than outward conformity, fondness for consensus, and apparent gregariousness might suggest. During the 120 years since the Meiji Emperor's "Charter Oath" proclaimed the objective of garnering the know-how of the world, and set the country's sights on modernisation, the Japanese have studied our culture to learn all they can from us, with a methodical seriousness that shames as much as flatters us.

For the Japanese too are nothing if not insular, indeed display some unhappy by-products of that condition—disdain for outsiders, obsession with homogeneity, tense relationships with neighbouring states—and, unlike ourselves, they never ruled a worldwide empire. But they cannot be accused of uneducated lack of interest in Britain. They have all studied English for years at school, paying far too much heed to our mechanistic grammar, too little to colloquial speech. They have earnestly sampled our literature; though on lines of selectivity not always self-apparent, with secondary works like Maugham's *Of Human Bondage* high on every set-books list. Their institutions have acquired an affluent taste for British cultural loot: nine First Folios of Shakespeare (more than we or the Americans possess) are in Japan; and among their more improbable recent acquisi-

GEORGE WEBB *was in the Colonial Service from 1953-63, and served in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office from 1963-85. He is now Director of the Management Development Centre of the City University Business School in London. "Kipling's Japan", which he edited with Hugh Cortazzi, has just been published by The Athlone Press.*

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tions has been the complete archive of the old *Daily Herald*.

One of their common disappointments in London, a city above all whose inhabitants might be expected to have a world view, is to discover at once how little we know about Japan. We do not improve matters by shoring up our ignorance with an all-too-detectable bonding of superficial prejudice. Perhaps it was always so, and we are better than we were; but it was more excusable before the world shrank, and before Japan became its foremost creditor. Comprehend them or not, the manufacturing clout of the Japanese is such that we have been obliged to accept salutary lessons from them in industrial management; the muscle of their vastly capitalised banks is so immense that should they choose to flex it more acquisitively their impact on our entire economy would be incalculable.

For all this, though the Japanese in Britain are representatives of an economic superpower, their country is not immune from domestic problems—undeveloped social security, illiquid financial markets, excess industrial productivity, inordinate fixed costs, dreadfully corrupt politics, a fearsome criminal class, two million alcoholics, anachronistically subordinated women, constricted accommodation space, a phobia of being overhauled by the Koreans. Yet their national motivation remains formidably unimpaired, driving their economy upward in a still-ascendant graph. As for the scale of their presence in Britain, it has trebled in ten years, to 30,000. Their exported goods—before the War a byword for cheap shoddiness, now still competitive in price but of a quality that we can hardly match, backed by conscientious service—are everywhere among us. The Japanese deserve our really close attention, which it cannot be said they get.

Not that we have been oblivious to Japan. For over a century, we have formed a series of popular mental images of that country. These are of some historical interest, but have usually been more vivid than relevant, and always failed to give due prominence to one key element in Japan's astounding transformation. This element has been the inherent discipline, the quasi-religious sense of purpose, the objective of life, partly conveyed by an elusive term, *ikigai*. One aspect of this many-faceted ideal is very manifest today in the extraordinary commitment of Japanese employees to their company; another has formerly shown itself less engagingly in a cult of suicide and in the wartime "fanaticism" of Japanese troops; yet another was described in 1889 by Rudyard Kipling, after watching the incredible dedication of a Kyoto craftsman hand-polishing a single little piece of *cloisonné* ware which he would be rubbing unremittingly for months.

But though Kipling as a visitor wrote perceptively about the profundity and untiringness of Japanese commitment—particularly in their craftsmanship, whether *netsuke*-carving or railway-construction—the common view from distant Britain in 1889 was that the Japanese were "quaint". It seemed excusable to smile at their imitativeness, determinedly dressing in most unbecoming Victorian clothes like would-be Europeans, and equipping themselves with Clyde-built ironclads like an aspiring naval power. Were they truly to be taken seriously? All this earnest Westernisation was much less picturesque than the intricate formalities of their lurid feudal past, which lent themselves so agreeably to Gilbertian burlesque:

If you want to know who we are,
We are gentlemen of Japan:
On many a vase and jar,
On many a screen and fan,
We figure in lively paint,
Our attitudes queer and quaint. . . .

Indeed, a century ago, traditional Japanese art was captivating European connoisseurs with its form of impressionism, its exquisitely stylised unreality: Oscar Wilde, again in 1889, affected to speculate that it was too beautiful to be true: "Japan is a pure invention. There is no such country, there are no such people." Such condescending whimsy, though rooted in admiration for past artistry, was unwelcome to a nation striving above all to put the past behind it and force the industrial pace; in 1901 the British Japanologist, Basil Hall Chamberlain, warned his compatriots:

> "Whatever you do, don't expatiate, in the presence of Japanese of the new school, on those old, quaint and beautiful things Japanese which rouse your most genuine admiration. . . . Old Japan is dead, and the only decent thing to do with the corpse is to bury it."

From the Japanese standpoint this was sound enough, but to most Western observers Japan's unique achievement was her past artistic production, certainly not the mediocre output of her modern factories.

There were few Japanese in London in those days. Those who came were well aware that in modern terms they had a lot to learn, that their Meiji Revolution, for all its hurried programme, had not brought them anywhere near to parity with the West's immense accomplishments. They were self-consciously *in statu pupillari*, and were doubtless condescended to. The Japanese novelist Soseki Natsume, miserable in Camberwell diggings in 1901, was oppressed by the freezing demeanour of the English whom he met. They were grand, and supercilious, and he felt "like a shaggy dog among wolves".

By the 20th century, however, our stereotyped view of the Japanese was undergoing some change. On the military level, after Japan's resounding defeat of China in 1894, and robust performance on our side in the Boxer Rising, it became apparent that she was indeed to be taken seriously. When Britain abandoned "splendid isolation", the country she first turned to was Japan, with whom a limited but formal alliance was signed in 1902—before the Entente with France. In the Russo-Japanese War, British sympathies were strongly with "plucky little Japan", not least when the Japanese Navy, largely British-built and trained, sensationally defeated the Russians in the Tsushima Straits. In World War I, Japan operated as an ally against Germany in the Pacific, and later played a prominent part in Siberia against the Bolsheviks. Her armed forces had raised her profile with the world and she would never be quaint again. Unfortunately, they were not disposed to let it rest at that.

In the 1920s, ominously, the Anglo-Japanese alliance was allowed to lapse. In the next decade a grim period of brutal

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Japanese aggression opened, first in China, then in the arena of a wider war. Though Japan's military achievement was extraordinary, her ruthless methods provoked in her enemies such bitter detestation that strong traces of it last to this day. At its peak, that hatred was intense enough to make the use of atomic weapons seem wholly justified to end a frightful war; as such an expedient, it is still widely defended in retrospect. Even now, odious memories of wartime Japan are easily rekindled in Britain, for example by the powerful new Chinese film, *Sorghum,* or by publicity connected with the recent death of Emperor Hirohito.

Japanese in Britain are conscious of this hostile undercurrent, and were shocked by a British ex-prisoner's threat to starve himself to death (a gesture Japanese in its extremeness) in protest against Prince Philip's attendance at Hirohito's funeral. Having lost the War in atrocious circumstances, they are well placed to understand the excusable irrationality of individuals who are willing to buy Japanese products but cannot put long-past atrocities out of mind. Some also perceive, better than their compatriots at home, that their government's bland ambivalence about the causes of the War is most unhelpful. A Japanese businessman said to me, "If you have failed to forget, perhaps we have failed to remember".

However, for most of the British, the War has receded into history, and provides merely one or two of the diversity of disconnected images which the word "Japanese" evokes for us. Moreover, images from the War are now less potent than images of today, such as Japan's omnipresent photographic and electronic products, or her cars, rolling out of factories she has set up in this country, successfully managed on the most enlightened lines. We have at last arrived at that recognition of "new Japan" which Basil Hall Chamberlain was urging on us in 1901. We have belatedly attained a vision of their country which, however uninformed in detail, is more plausible to Japanese than one conditioned by anachronism or dislike, by *Rashomon* or *The Mikado* or *The Bridge on the River Kwai.* We mostly admire what we know of today's Japan: we may even wonder what Japanese who live here find to admire in today's Britain.

LET IT BE SAID AT ONCE: all generalisations uttered by non-Japanese about Japan are (except for this one) suspect. I have stated many already. More will follow: they serve a descriptive purpose, but as tools of precision they are wanting. The Japanese may be homogeneous, but they are not all similar; and when foreign residence frees them from the conformism of Japan they become less so. The number of Japanese in Britain is very large, and they have come here for diverse purposes and differ widely from each other.

Of the 30,000 who have registered with their Embassy, 16,000 live in Greater London, another 7,000 in adjacent counties. Any statistical breakdown by occupation produces figures which, being fluid in aggregate, changeable in detail and inclusive of families, are of limited utility. Loosely, however, in the London area, some 600 are here on official duty, some 2,400 as students or academics, some 400 connected with journalism, freelance writing or the arts, and over 11,000 in private sector business. The number of Japanese firms now represented in Britain has doubled since 1984, approaching 800, and will increase further as the Single European Market of 1992, which gives some concern to Japan, draws near.

JAPANESE in London tend to cluster. Colonies of them are conspicuously entrenched in Golders Green and Finchley, and further out in Ealing, Wimbledon, and Kingston. They have attracted to themselves a fairly comprehensive range of Japanese services that depend on them: shops and restaurants, golf-courses and clubs, and a good school in Acton, insulated from the British educational system and offering 1,000 Japanese children a curriculum tailored to the desperately competitive standards they will return to in Japan. The community has its own weekly newspaper, *Eikoku News,* with a circulation of 7,000; they also patronise specialised Japanese-staffed travel and housing agencies.

Since many of them work and relax together, and appear to be diffident in our language and impenetrable in theirs, the community as a whole has gained an image of exclusivity. This apartness is not resented by the perceptive Londoner as the non-assimilability of certain other communities is resented—the Japanese are mostly too Westernised, too self-effacing for that, and are known to be not "immigrants" but birds of passage. But it is a barrier to mutual understanding, and also encourages the erroneous supposition, dear to the British propensity for myth, that all Japanese are alike—that even if they do not look alike, they think alike.

That is, of course, far from the truth. Some Japanese in London are so anglicised, so steeped in our civilisation, as to be in effect as British as we are. At the opposite pole are some, so short of viable English, so unused to being abroad, that they will never, in a few years of residence, muster the will to leave the pack of their compatriots. In between are many who, after initially gravitating to the reassuring milieu of their kind, break out of it, make their own way, discover merits in the alien scene, and become loth to leave it. This happens to some wives, finding in Britain a woman's status less subordinate than at home, yet seeing more of their husbands, and enjoying holidays in Europe. It also happens to writers, artists and intellectuals, many of whom dislike the compulsive corporate gregariousness for which Japan is famous, and find Western individualism congenial by contrast.

It cannot be an unconnected fact that London branches of even the leading Japanese firms, such as the top four investment houses, are beginning to suffer defections. Not to overstate it, what was rare is becoming less so. It is too early to say *"La Garde recule!",* but an appreciable number of well-regarded Japanese executives in major companies are resigning for other employment in London and elsewhere outside Japan. They evidently tire of the stifling corporate loyalty of the Japanese system, and notice that societies such as ours, with a lower Gross Domestic Product, can yet offer higher rewards—better housing, bigger cars, longer holidays, cheaper living costs. It will be highly interesting to see if this small trend, a symptom of something bigger, will continue.

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If it does, it will not be because London is attractive *per se* for Japanese to live in. It will be because London, and the West more generally, is perceived as offering something that Japanese are beginning to desire, but that their own society is not yet ready to provide. That "something" will be a matter of attitudes—social acceptance of consumption as against thrift, of display of wealth as against self-effacement, of enjoyment of leisure as against obsessive industry. If Japan, against the tendency of her culture, moves that way, it will be because her great wealth, and the pressures of an increasingly "post-industrial" economy, will make it easy, if not inevitable, to do so.

For reasons of national character, the likelihood would at present seem remote, were not some symptoms of change already visible. Though the level of personal saving in Japan remains extremely high, self-denial from conspicuous consumption by individuals is too unnatural to be indefinitely sustained, given the Gross Domestic Product available to fuel it. (In 60 years, Japan's population has multiplied by 2, her GDP by 18: comparable figures for the USA are 2 and 6, for the United Kingdom 1.2 and 3.5.) In Tokyo, this affluence is giving rise to new phenomena which run counter to Japanese tradition—taste for luxury, reluctance to conceal wealth, impatience with austerity. It is a tribute to Japanese self-discipline that this aspect of consumerism has taken so long to rear its head. In London it is the norm; Japanese in London may well judge whether their country is going the same way, and may help the process.

To turn back from the future to the present. In general, Japanese businessmen in London came simply because they were sent by their firms, their wives following because they were dutiful; the question of wanting to leave Japan or choosing to come to England will have been secondary. However, they will on the whole have regarded London as a good posting. For some, the anticipation of speaking English, studied for ten years at school but never before put to use, would be attractive, much more so than the prospect of learning a new language. For others, a tour in London as a centre of world finance would be obviously good for a career. For a friend of mine, on his first posting outside Japan, the unexpected sight of cherry in blossom as he drove in from Heathrow quite won his heart, and outweighed all his initial frustrations over housing. For all, the prospect of a cost of living lower than at home, and of finding Japanese goods cheaper in London than in Tokyo (what we unkindly call "dumped" exports), would amount to an inducement in advance.

In some few cases, to travel hopefully will have proved more pleasant than to arrive, but the usual experience of Japanese is to enjoy London. However, to establish the pattern of their tastes and preferences would need a poll, which is beyond my scope. All I have done, seeking impressions, not statistics, is to elicit the views (which were not identical) of such few businessmen, officials, and their families as I had ready access to. I have struck out as irrelevant the more subjective absolutes—endurance of the weather, enjoyment of the theatre, difficulties with English, homesickness for Japan, even the infuriating tiresomeness of being assumed to be Chinese. I will confine myself to some few comparisons which seem revealing.

Alas, we are ruder than we thought, especially on the service side, in shops, post offices, and even banks. Ungracious offhandedness is often taken as positive discourtesy, especially when compared with the exceptionally attentive standards of Japan. As a schoolgirl commented to me, "Shop assistants in Japan are very polite, to gain a good reputation for the shop", whereas "the attitude of the sellers here can be, well, inappropriate". This matter of ill-demeanoured service, among the strongest of first impressions, lingers as a persistent irritation, especially if compounded by another nasty factor: as the same girl politely but firmly noted, "Asians are often treated differently". The manners of British drivers, too, seem worse than in Japan, and no Londoner will be surprised that heavier exhaust pollution than in Tokyo, and less parking space, make driving an ordeal, while the Underground is seen as unnecessarily filthy and discreditably unsafe.

As to crime in general, in any comparison with Japan London comes off humiliatingly badly: it is not just a matter of visitors' shocked impressions, but of published statistics which have not been seriously questioned: in Britain you are three times as likely to be murdered, eight times as likely to be raped, and fifty times as likely to be robbed, as in Japan. (Western European figures are roughly comparable with ours, American figures conspicuously worse.) The ugly prevalence of mugging in the London streets is a blight to which the Japanese here are especially sensitive. It is not, they explain, that Japan has no criminal class: her legendary mafia-style *yakuza* are a byword for terroristic gangsterism: but they prey on each other and their like, rather than on the innocent public, and burglaries are largely deterred by intensive community policing.

On the credit side, which is happily extensive, sophisticated Japanese are full of praise for the great range of high-grade entertainment available in London—music, cinema and theatre—and consider it better, more various and cheaper than its Tokyo equivalents. They also enjoy the serious sightseeing—museums, galleries and historic places—and pay tribute not only to the fine condition of buildings and their contents, but (in this case) to the service that goes with them, and its assured handling of the foreign visitor. They are impressed by the size and beauty of London's parks: these are indeed by any standard extensive, seven times more so *per capita* than the parks of Tokyo. They are pleased, too, by the larger size and lower rental of the houses and flats they find for themselves. Less agreeable can be the discovery that not all artisans are skilled, nor landlords as punctilious as at home: one of my friends declares that an abiding memory of England will be his struggle with his landlord—still in the balance after many months—to get some broken paving slabs replaced.

The international diversity of London's restaurants is attractive to the Japanese, and partly compensates for what some see as a disappointing lack of the tea-shops and cafés

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that proliferate in Japan; as for London's Japanese restaurants, these tend to be regarded as high-priced, only to be patronised by those on expense accounts. Specialised Japanese food shops are expensive too, and most Japanese in London quickly become accustomed to British groceries and supermarkets. These have shortcomings—slow and slapdash service, lack of variety in the Japanese staples of fish and vegetables—but they offer a wide range of unaccustomed foods to which most Japanese quite readily adapt. It is mistaken to think of the Japanese in London as obsessively centred on their own community with no outside recourse, eating and drinking only their familiar imports from home, and spending their evenings crooning nostalgic songs against a background tape in the insulated conviviality of a *karaoke* bar.

Another mistaken image that we have relates to their motivation. Being ourselves conditioned to think in Western terms of individual people as "economic animals" and of companies whose purpose is to maximise their dividends, we observe with uncomfortable awe the workaholic Japanese, sacrificing their family life in the struggle for ever-higher efficiency; and we presume that they are economic animals, or ants, more highly motivated than ourselves. In fact, they are inheritors of a post-Confucian ethic, which instils in them a regard for hierarchy, obedience, and hard work; and for the national interest certainly, which is not the same as vulgar profit. It is no coincidence that they share this ethic with Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore, all successful economically. The profundity of the Confucian motivation is attested by the sincerity with which they sing their remarkable company songs, which are all about harmony, the joy of service, and the ideal of the public good.

As for what they are doing here in London, particularly with their massive banking operations, there are two opinions. The Japanophobe view is that they plan to take over our financial institutions. The more sanguine conjecture is that they have no such aim: that although Japanese banks now handle over a third of all the banking assets in Britain, much of this activity is in local authority financing and not in the classic private sector; that the Japanese have come to London because it is the banking focus of the world, and because they have money to spend and have to use it somehow; that private consumption in Japan is still so restricted by custom that excess money has to find an outlet. (In the 1970s it found it in "sovereign debt" of Third-World countries; but the Japanese, like our own bankers, burnt their fingers in that venture.) What could now be more natural than to operate in a banking role abroad, as the British banking system did in its 19th-century heyday? and where more natural than in London, the world's financial entrepot?

If this last view is correct, we are wrong to argue, as the British Government argues, that reciprocity of deregulation is important, and that Tokyo should be as unrestricted for foreign business as the City. On the contrary, the great strength of the City as a financial centre is its uniquely open door, compared with the restrictiveness of its foreign rivals. That comparison with over-regulated New York brought us the post-War Eurocurrency market. The same comparison with the inflexibility of Tokyo retains for London the banking turntable of the world. Let others come to us. In this real sense the Japanese in our midst are helping to sustain our lead over Continental centres of finance, are increasing our tax revenue, are making employment. For this—as for other reasons—we should welcome them.

Cohabitant Kinds

Silent, I knead my clay. Chieko's loom
Clack-clackets as she weaves. A working mouse
Gnaws at a peanut dropped to the floor of the room
For which some sparrow-freeman of our house,
Pecking, competes. A mantis perched on the line
Sharpens its sickles; while, with a hop-skip-jump,
Hunting blue flies, some spider darts to dine.

Hung towels stir in the draught. With a sudden thump
The mail arrives. The hands of the clock grind round.
An iron pot, like a squat black cat-thing, purrs
And hibiscus-leaves, green tongues stuck out, astound
The air with impudence. Then, as the earth-fish stirs
And a small ground-tremor sets the whole place shaking,
Nervous cicadas instrumentalise
Their sense of the world as a thing of a single making.

For all these things and creatures, pots and flies,
Are mustered in patterns reflecting some master-fit.

And the noon-sun, huge, burns down, straight down, on it.

Takamura Kotaro 1883-1956
Translated by Graeme Wilson

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The Background to "Make-up"

Translator's Notes

"MAKE-UP" ("KESHO") was written and first performed in Japan in 1983. The author, Inoue Hisashi (1934-), is one of the most original playwrights and satirists of post-War Japan. While many of his contemporaries look westward to writers such as Kafka, Camus, and Beckett, Inoue is unique in drawing his inspiration from the works of 17th- and 18th-century Japanese satirical writers and playwrights. His material is wholly indigenous and is set in a colourful, extravagantly colloquial language full of wordplay, puns and onomatopoeia, which confounds translators. For this reason his work has not so far been accessible to Western readers and audiences. *Kesho,* with little of Inoue's usual wordplay and wild humour, is not typical of his work, but perhaps because of that comes within the reach of a Western audience.

The Japanese theatre still retains much that is old and traditional among its modern, progressive elements. The medieval *Noh* and the 17th-century *Kabuki* theatres perform side by side with their contemporary and Western counterparts, with their centuries-old artistic traditions firmly intact. Numerous other forms of traditional popular entertainment—such as musical story-telling, stand-up comedy acts and performances of period melodramas—coexist with avant-garde fringe theatre productions, drawing large popular support. In this panorama of diverse theatrical activities, troupes of itinerant players, like the one depicted in *Kesho,* represent one such traditional face of Japan.

These troupes are often led by women, and tour the country performing *Kabuki*-style period melodramas. Their history goes back to the Middle Ages. In fact, *Kabuki,* first performed by an itinerant woman player and her troupe in 1603, was one offspring of this tradition. In her legendary *kabuki* ("deviant") performance, she impersonated a dashing young dandy, flirting with courtesans in a brothel scene. Women played a dominant part in the early days of *Kabuki,* many of them taking their *kabuki* dances on provincial tours. However, public performances by women were banned in 1629 by the Confucian-inspired Tokugawa régime. *Kabuki* in the major cities responded deftly by employing first young men and then, when they too were banned in 1652, older men to impersonate female roles; it developed into the popular metropolitan theatre of the Tokugawa masses by the end of the century. In the provinces, however, the edict of the Central Government was not strictly enforced, and itinerant players, men and women alike, continued their popular tradition, performing and developing their own *kabuki* repertoires.

After more than two centuries of self-imposed closure, Japan opened herself to modern Western influences in 1868. Thereupon *Kabuki*—the mass entertainment of feudal Japan—came under harsh criticism from enlightened reformers, who denounced it as a vulgar, low-bred theatre unworthy of an aspiring modern nation. A movement to reform *Kabuki* sprang up, led by high government officials; the reformers endeavoured to remodel it into a respectable modern theatre along the lines of the Ibsenian modern European theatre. But those attempts failed, with the reformers launching their own New Theatre Movement based exclusively on producing imported Western plays.

Since then, while *Kabuki* has climbed from humble origins to the status of classical theatre, consolidating its increasingly exclusive tradition, the popular tradition of itinerant players has remained where it began, close to the hearts of the common people. A small number of such troupes still tour the provinces, performing old-fashioned period plays in a spontaneous informal manner, as *Kabuki* was once performed, to loyal, adoring audiences. *Kesho* dramatises the fate of one such troupe.

In keeping with the tradition, the mainstay of the popular theatre repertory is *Kabuki*-like period melodrama in which the male lead is played by the actress/manager of the troupe, and the female lead by an actor. When the troupe is led by an actor, both leads are played by men, though actresses do perform with them as well. The repertoires, usually arranged by the head of the troupe, are not written down, since the rough plots of popular plays are well known. The players learn their lines by word of mouth, as happens in *Kesho,* and the head of the troupe often selects the evening's programme in the dressing-room, having only then gauged the size and temperament of the audience.

In performance, there is a great deal of spontaneous verbal and physical exchange between the players and the audience, who throw gifts and tips on to the stage and may come up the aisle to embrace their favourite players. The actors in turn readily stop the show to exchange repartee with the audience. As in *Kesho,* it is customary for the head of the troupe to say a few words of greeting to the audience during the course of the evening.

Akemi Horie

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Inoue Hisashi

Make-up

THE FORLORN DRESSING-ROOM *of a run-down little theatre. A large make-up mirror downstage left of centre for the troupe leader; however, the mirror cannot be seen by the audience. In fact, all this play actually needs is an actress to play the actress-manager; make-up equipment, costumes, and a wig for her to transform herself into a "yakuza" hero named Isaburō the Brave; twenty or so "enka" songs; and the active imagination of the audience.*[1]

As the light comes on in silence, a woman is seen taking a nap in front of (from the audience's viewpoint, the other side of) the mirror. According to what she herself believes, she is Satsuki Yōko, the forty-six-year-old actress-manager of a travelling theatre troupe, "The Satsuki".

Nothing much takes place for a while. Only Satsuki Yōko tossing about vulgarly from time to time. At her third or fourth toss, an "enka" song becomes audible in the distance. For example, Suizenji Kiyoko's "What Would You Do If You Were A Man". At this sound, Satsuki Yōko springs to her feet as if she had been yanked up by a string from the ceiling.

HERE WE GO, they've started letting in the audience. *(Giving a quick glance in the direction above the mirror.)* Damn, what a black sky for a July evening and it's not even six yet! Can't afford rain now, not on a Saturday night when we're hoping for good business . Hold on for another 40 minutes or so, won't you? Till the curtain's up?

Apparently there is a window diagonally above the mirror. She places a Dunhill cigarette between her lips and lights it with a gold-plated lighter. She takes one deep breath as she gazes at herself in the mirror and blows the smoke out at her reflection. Thereupon an apprentice of the troupe, visible to her but invisible to the audience, brings tea.

Ta.

She takes a sip, and chances to look at the boy's face.

Hey, your make-up is much too thin, love. For heaven's sake, paint your face solid like a wall, won't you? Once you get into the habit of putting on sloppy make-up, you're finished as an actor in our business.

As she moves about stage-right checking the make-up of other actors:

Start getting stingy with the make-up, and you end up exposing your rotten old faces; you just can't imagine how many troupes like us have gone bust on that account.

It seems that she is using the space according to the following principles. Firstly, she believes that ten or so members of her troupe are present stage-right; so when addressing them she will look towards this direction. Secondly, the right wing of the stage that we see apparently functions simultaneously as the wing of the stage on which she is about to perform. Thirdly, she will soon produce on her left an invisible man from a TV channel; in her conversation with him, she will direct her face and mind towards stage-left.

Further, the "enka" songs will be heard continuously throughout the performance, and the selection of these songs must be made with great care. In the main, lively, rhythmic songs with up-beat feelings must be chosen. Under no circumstances should a morose and melancholy piece like Misora Hibari's "The Sorrowful 'Sake'" be played. Indeed the selection of the "enka" medley, played to attract the audience, is one of the important tasks of the troupe leader. In other words, the songs played are mostly her own favourites; thus she will from time to time sway her body

[1] The wig specified by the author is *ichō-honke-binmushiri*, the type of hair style popular among young *yakuza* during the 18th and 19th centuries, i.e., the latter half of the Edo period (1603-1868).

Yakuza: gambler-gangsters. Etymologically, a gambling term, being a combination of the three numbers 8 *(ya)*, 9 *(ku)*, and 3 *(za)*, which scored nil in *sanmai-karuta*, the traditional Japanese gambling card-game. From this association, the word *yakuza* came to refer to "worthless or useless things and persons" in the Edo period. More to the point, by the end of the period, the gambler-gangsters themselves came to be called *yakuza* collectively. They formed clans, and achieved notoriety for the violent feuds among rival clans. They were also known for their extravagant tattoos, sometimes covering almost the whole body, and for their fanatical adherence to Confucian ethical principles such as loyalty *(chūgi)* and obligation *(giri)*. The *yakuza* clans still exist in present-day Japan, mostly running legitimate businesses; only occasional outbreaks of violence between rival clans remind us of their past associations.

Enka: the collective name for a particular kind of old-fashioned Japanese popular song, often expressing the sentiments of an outlawed *yakuza* hero or a wandering heroine.

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to the music. One final point: as far as the "enka" songs are concerned, the audience can also hear them.

Let me remind you once again, if I may, this is our opening night here. I want you to give it everything you've got and try like hell out there. I myself have decided to appear in all the numbers tonight, from the opening play to the Grand Song and Dance Finale; my strategy is to captivate the first-night audience with the full blast of my performance, so with any luck they'll spread the word and bring in a good crowd for the rest of the week. So keep up with my pace as best you can, will you? As you know, this theatre is going to be knocked down in ten days; apparently a block of flats is going up instead. This means we've got to gird up our loins and try all the harder, wouldn't you say? Who's that? Who gave that silly laugh just now? What's so funny, darling? Eh? . . . as the boss is a "lady", mightn't it cause me a bit of discomfort with a tight loin-cloth cutting into my crotch? Honestly, it's only a figure of speech—you're asking for a good hiding, love! Seriously, if the very last finale of this theatre should end up with a poor house, the name of Satsuki Yōko will be mud; the good name of the Satsuki troupe will be lost forever. So I'm asking every one of you to pull your weight and try your hardest to jam-pack the house every night; I'll be putting my life on the line, too. Then luck will surely come our way; great theatres like the Shinohara Enbujō and the Mokubakan will come rushing to buy us out. So, do your damnedest, this could be your great beginning. Now, as for my speech of greeting to the audience, I'll do it right after the second play as usual. *(She practises her speech.)* "Ladies and gentlemen, welcome, welcome to our performance tonight. Thank you very much for coming so eagerly on our first night, despite our long absence from these parts. I know it is impolite to address you from up here on stage, but my heart is at your feet and I would like to express our deep gratitude. Although we are already half-way into tonight's performance, may I take the opportunity of this interval to say a few words of greeting. Tonight is the all-important opening night, and with your kind indulgence we have so far performed the opening play *Isaburō's Parting* and the second piece *The Tale of the Hairdresser Shinza* without mishap . . . fantastic? Was it really fantastic? Oh, thank you, thank you. And now what remains is *The Golden Stage of Song and Dance*. . . . For the finale, we are presenting our special number, *Fukagawa:* we shall all dress up as handsome young dandies and erotic *geisha,* and enchant you with our titillating beauty. So I hope you will all make yourselves comfortable and enjoy the show right to the end. Once again, we thank you very much for coming to our performance tonight. . . ."

She has been smoking as she rehearses her speech, but now stubs out the cigarette in an ash-tray. She did not like the speech.

GOD, THAT WAS pretty feeble, I must say. *(She thinks a little.)* "Welcome, welcome to our performance. It is twenty years since my husband Satsuki Tatsutarō II passed away in his prime at the age of 31. Perhaps some of you may remember the incident; twenty years ago, my husband died suddenly on this very stage of this theatre while performing. . . ." Mind you, if anyone says "I remember", he's a big liar. True, the man disappeared twenty years ago all right. But the real truth is that he ran off with one of his fans and the mistress of some ironmonger[2] in Ryōgoku, heroically abandoning his sinking ship. "Dying on stage. Indeed, ladies and gentlemen, it must have been a most gratifying end for my husband, born actor that he was." The bastard was hand-picked by my dad Satsuki Tatsutarō I to marry me; so naturally he was, shall we says, an above-average actor. However, character-wise, ugh, what a worm! "That was the period when film stars like Kinnosuke, Chiyonosuke and Yūjirō were in their prime, and television was invading our homes with terrifying speed. The theatres were empty wherever you went—the full houses we had had in the '50s seemed like a dream, and troupes like us were going bankrupt one after the other, one yesterday, two today and three tomorrow. . . ." *(Glowering at the invisible mirror.)* Can't see a damn thing in this mirror, for some reason. "Needless to say, we, the Satsuki troupe, were no exception; at the best of times our audience was 20 to 30 and we were living from hand to mouth. We were so broke, we were grateful for the cigarette butts you left behind, which we collected and smoked each night after the performance. Then came the untimely death of my husband; when your luck runs out, bad luck really does pile up on you; as they say, 'You stumble, only to find yourself in the dung heap'." Would you believe, within ten days the number of Satsuki members went down from fifteen to a bare three. Still, if they had simply run away, I could have forgiven them. But, damn them, they pinched the precious costumes and wigs my dad had collected over the years, as a kind of farewell present; it turned out that I'd been acting with a gang of thieves all those years. To cap it all, I had a baby boy, three months old. I tell you, I really felt I had no way out but to kill myself and the boy right then. "But, thank heavens, you were with us; our small but eager, warm-hearted, and appreciative audience were with us." Mind you, there were some greasy ones too. "Yeah, I'll buy a block of 50 tickets, so let me do what I want with you for the night", one oozed. How could I refuse? "It was the warm support of such audiences that kept the Satsuki Troupe going during those difficult years. We are eternally grateful." Shall I cry here? "It is impolite to address you from up here on stage but my heart is at your feet and I would like to express our deepest gratitude. We are already half-way into tonight's performance, but may I take the opportunity of this interval to say a few words of greeting? Tonight is the all-important opening night, so we have opened our performance with my hit, *Isaburō's Parting.* This is my favourite, favourite play. I've had the pleasure of performing it for you hundreds of times, but every time I play the part I cry, and I've cried again tonight. The second piece, *The Tale of the Hairdresser Shinza,* was my husband Satsuki Tatsutarō II's star turn, indeed he was performing this very play when

[2] *Tetsuzai* (iron material)-*tonya* (wholesaler). The text indicates that Satsuki's husband ran off with two people: "a fan" and "the mistress of a wholesale ironmonger" *(hiiki-kyaku to Ryōgoku no tetsuzai-tonya-san no nigō to).*

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he was struck down on this stage twenty years ago. Tonight, to commemorate his death, I, Satsuki Yōko, have played his part to the best of my ability. And now what remains is *The Golden Stage of Song and Dance*. . . ." Okay, okay—that will do for the speech.

Looking towards a specific point stage-right.

WHO'S THAT—who's snoring at this time of day? Nakamaru, my dear. Mr Ichikawa Nakamaru. Grandpa Nakamaru. *(Shouts.)* Nakamaru! For heaven's sake, how could you drift off so shamelessly like that, just before the curtain? Don't forget, it's up to you and me to hold the audience's attention in *Isaburō's Parting*. If you have time to snore, shouldn't you be going over the scene a couple more times? Look, this is the first time you've ever played the part of Isaburō's mother; I hoped you'd take it a little more seriously. . . . Wipe up your dribble. And will you please re-do your make-up, around the mouth? *(Sotto voce.)* Really, makes you wonder, doesn't it? We had to ask him to help out from today because we're a bit short-staffed, but what a promising start! "Yes, I have been acclaimed as the best mature female impersonator in the Kantō region", he says. First-rate when it comes to self-promotion, I must say.

At this point, her attention is caught by something in the wings stage-left. She looks towards it, and then speaks in the direction of stage-right.

Toshi, there's someone there. You mustn't let people into the dressing-room before curtain up. You know the dogsbody's duties include guarding the dressing-room against intruders. We just had our costumes pinched at the Oshima Theatre in Kawasaki, remember? The chappy looked so impressive I thought he was a journalist from some magazine; then, before you know it, he runs off with a basket full of costumes. . . . Eh? Someone from TBS Television? He says he'd like to talk to me after the show, so you let him in?

Turns towards stage-left.

Oh my, let me introduce myself: I am Satsuki Yōko.

She takes something deferentially. It looks like a card.

Mr Koyama. Well, very pleased to meet you.

Towards stage-right.

Toshi, dear, why didn't you tell me sooner that we have a guest?

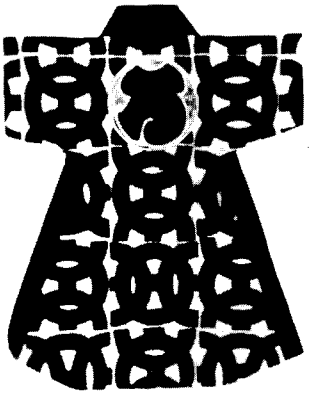
In the direction of stage-left.

You don't mind waiting until after the show? It would be better afterwards because it concerns a serious matter? A serious matter, I see. My heart is already going pit-a-pat with excitement, like a little girl's.

Towards stage-right.

Toshi, darling, how about opening a bottle of beer for our guest? And could you run along to the front of the house to get us some *oden*[3] to go with the beer? Well, just *oden* might be a bit lonely. Add a plate of grilled squid. . . . Wait a minute, Grandpa Nakamaru, I didn't ask you to go along. Just imagine, an old woman in white make-up parades across the stalls carrying a grilled squid in front of her—the audience will have a fit! You're an old hand and I'm sure you don't need a lecture on the actor's ABC but, for heaven's sake, our job is to sell dreams—you can't walk about the stalls in your make-up and costume. Eh? You want to wait for your cue in the wing? That's why you were going out? Honestly, Grandpa; come here a minute.

Her eyes move. They follow his movement which stops at her side.



NAKAMARU, DEAR, I don't like to say this, but have you really ever played a female part before? The way you just walked over here—you were concentrating so hard on pointing your toes inwards that you forgot all about your knees. I tell you what, why don't you put a sheet of paper between your knees and try to walk without dropping it. That's the basic technique for walking like a woman. For goodness sake, don't just stand there looking gormless—try it. Here, take this tissue. Now, as you walk about, listen very carefully. We've already gone over[4] the scene of *Isaburō's Parting* twice. If an actor can't get it right after two rehearsals, there isn't much hope for him in our kind of theatre; I'm afraid he'll have to go legit[5]. So, remember, *Isaburō's Parting* is made up of three scenes. The first scene is almost entirely mine. There lives in the sea-town of Chōshi a clan of *yakuza* gangsters called the Yamagen. The chieftain is Yamamoto Gengorō and I am—that is, Isaburō is—the heir to the clan. *Yakuza* they may be, but the Yamagen are one of that rare and honest breed of gangsters, made up from top to bottom of saint-like characters. Well, one day Isaburō, on his old man's behalf, pays a visit to Katori Shrine in Sawara, in neighbouring Shimousa province. When the rival Isetatsu clan find this out, however, they seize the opportunity to raid the Yamagen. The Isetatsu is an upstart *yakuza* clan in the same town,

[3] A traditional Japanese dish of cooked vegetables and fish. This could be replaced by *sushi*—a more widely know Japanese dish—in performance.

[4] *Kuchidate-keiko:* a mode of rehearsal still practised in the traditional popular theatre, where the lines and plot of the play are learned orally from the head of the troupe, without a written script.

[5] The Japanese here is *Shingeki*—the New Theatre, which is the Japanese counterpart of the legitimate theatre in the West. The *Shingeki* produces "serious" foreign and native plays by such authors as Shakespeare, Chekhov, and Beckett, or Abe Kōbō and Inoue Hisashi, and naturally allows plenty of time for rehearsal. For the relation between the traditional Japanese theatre *Kabuki* and the New Theatre, see A. Horie-Webber, "Modernisation of the Japanese Theatre: The Shingeki Movement", in *Modern Japan* (ed. Beasley, Allen & Unwin, 1975).

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and naturally they're all villains. Caught unawares, and with the invincible Isaburō away, alas, not a single man of the Yamagen survives this vicious raid. And now the old chieftain lies drawing his last breath. . . . At this point the curtain rises. As soon as the curtain's up, Isaburō, who learned of the fatal news on his way home, comes rushing back, crying out "Father!". The old man, with his dying breath, says:

(The lines from the scene of "Isaburō's Parting" that appear several times in the following are for the most part based on a seven-five—or sometimes five-seven, seven-seven—syllabic rhythm.[6])

"I've been waiting for you, Isaburō. My life, like a rice cake in summer, won't last till the night. Don't bother attending to my wounds but listen, listen carefully to what I have to say. It's about your origin . . . you are not my real son. Some twenty-odd years ago, the slave-trader Denkichi gave me a babe-in-arms for five* ryō *of gold, and that child was you; you are my adopted son. What? You knew that? Then you also know where your real mother lives? Ah, that you don't know. I heard on the wind, she now makes a humble living alone at the Numata pass in windy Jōshū province, serving tea and selling straw sandals to travellers. Don't trouble yourself with avenging me. Forget the Isetatsu, but leave here at once. Here, this is the talisman that was tied around your neck as a baby; it's the talisman of the goddess Kishibo of Iriya. And 20* ryō*—my farewell gift to you. Take care, Isaburō, and look after your mother well. Ah . . . how detestable is the* yakuza *life!

She becomes the chieftain half-way through, and here she/he dies. But she rises immediately.

Good grief, what a long speech, bloody unnatural on his deathbed. That's how countless "popular" theatres went bust in the past. However, that's that for the moment. . . .

She looks towards stage-left.

Really, there are a lot of scenes like that in Shakespeare? You don't say. Uh . . . Shakespeare . . . Shakespeare. . . . Ah, him, he's the big shot in the legit. theatre, isn't he? Don't they ever go bankrupt, playing scenes like that? They don't? Aren't they lucky to have such tolerant audiences.

She begins to put on her costume.

Toshi, this *(a piece of her costume)* stinks. Hasn't been washed. Toshi. . . . Where is everybody in this play? . . . Actually, Isaburō does avenge his Yamagen foster-father. He dashes over to the Isetatsu headquarters all by himself and kills everyone in sight. In the process, he ends up also killing a crooked sheriff, Isetatsu's crony, and becomes an outlaw. This is the second scene; it centres around sword-fighting. Then comes the scene at the tea-hut on the Numata pass. Grandpa Nakamaru plays the old woman at the tea-hut, that's right, Isaburō's natural mother . . . you know that, do you? Well, then why do you need to wait in the wings before the curtain's up? That's what I wanted to ask you. Really, Grandpa, couldn't you just relax and wait in the dressing-room? The wings are too crowded; you can't hang around there without a good reason.

She puts on a wig at about this point. With the wig on she now looks very much "the abandoned son".

In the third scene, Nakamaru, dear, you are already on stage when the curtain rises. As the lights come up, you are seen sprinkling water in front of your tea-hut. The water accidentally hits the feet of Isaburō, who happens to be passing by. The old woman apologises profusely and offers him tea. Your line here is: ***"Three miles to a* sake *shop and two miles to a* tōfu *shop, this is a remote mountain hut, sir; I have nothing much to offer you but a cup of stewed tea. If you don't mind that, won't you please relieve your thirst. . . ."*** Got it? You must time this line exactly. Without your tea, Isaburō will just have to pass by the hut and be gone. Can you try that line?

She listens to his line as she puts on her costume, and responds to it.

"You speak the same dialect as mine, ma'am. Aren't you from the sea-town of Chōshi?"

She listens to the line spoken by the other.

"They say dialect is the passport of your homeland, and, just as I thought, you too come from Chōshi. How good to hear that familiar Chōshi accent in these strange parts. But I wonder, why should anyone brought up in sight of the ocean want to live in a remote mountainous place like this? There must be some deep reason . . . .Well, old mother, by some providence our paths have crossed here, and what's more we come from the same town; I'd like to hear your story . . . somehow I crave to hear it. As you see, I am a rolling stone; come tomorrow, I shall be gone from the Numata pass. Even if I wanted to repeat your story, I should have no one to tell it to. I shall forget it as soon as I hear it. So you can pretend you are just talking to a wall . . . ."

Suddenly, towards stage-left.

WELL what is this "serious matter" you wanted to talk about? As Isaburō says, ***"Somehow I crave to hear it . . . ."*** I know, you'd like me to appear on television. That's it, isn't it? Of course I will. It's great publicity. How about the whole Satsuki troupe appearing all together, wham . . . ! Oh, just myself? Well, in that case, let's see, first my close-up appears on the screen, with a big caption across the top saying something like "20 YEARS OF HARDSHIP! NOBLY THE ACTRESS/MANAGER BORE IT ALL"; then the music, ta-ra . . . . No? A reunion on the morning show!? But reunion with whom? Tagami Haruhiko! Oh, I've heard of him. He's the laddie who started out with the New Music Group, then broke away to become an actor, isn't he? I know the name and the face—I do at least read the gossip magazines, you know. I see, he's just got a big part in a prime-time TV drama, so, to boost publicity, you're setting up a real-life reunion drama on the morning show? Well, that's very nice for him. But personally,

[6] Five-seven or seven-five is the traditional syllabic rhythm of Japanese verse, as in the thirty-one-syllabic *waka* (5/7/5/7/7) and the seventeen-syllabic *haiku* (5/7/5).

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I don't know Tagami Haruhiko. And if I don't know the boy, it couldn't be a reunion, could it? What a funny idea. Are you really from TBS television?

To stage-right.

Grandpa, that long speech about her life you just tried—there were several important items missing. Would you please include all the points, in the right order, and speak clearly: *(1)* I was married to a fisherman in Chōshi twenty-three years ago; *(2)* I got pregnant right away and had a baby boy; *(3)* About that time, my husband, as if possessed by devils, suddenly began to go astray; *(4)* Three years later he was stabbed to death by a *yakuza* in a fight over gambling; *(5)* Furthermore he left behind as much as 30 *ryō* in gambling debts; *(6)* To pay off those debts, I was sold to a hostelry in Jōshū province as a prostitute; *(7)* I had no choice but to hand my baby over to a go-between; she promised to have him adopted by a respectable foster-family; *(8)* Two years later, I was bought out by a haberdashery merchant from Numata and became his second wife; *(9)* Immediately I started looking for the go-between, but she was nowhere to be found; my second husband went to Chōshi to look for the child several times, but he couldn't discover his whereabouts; *(10)* Eight years ago, my second husband died; I seem to have rotten luck in my choice of husbands. I folded up his shop and set up the tea-hut here. With the panoramic view from here, I feel as if I could see my home town, Chōshi, though of course one can't possibly see it . . . . So there are ten points altogether. Unless you mention all ten in the right order, it won't do, you know.

She has almost finished dressing herself for the part. It only remains to put on the straw sandals. While she draws the sword out and in of the scabbard:

And for the closing lines of this long speech about her life, please remember to highlight every word like a jewel. ***"Sir, you've been such a good listener that I seem to have revealed all my shameful past, despite myself. Now let me warm up a bottle of home-made sweet*** **sake** ***for you. There are some baked rice-cakes, too. It's cold in the mountains, and an empty stomach doesn't help, so won't you have something before you go . . . . What's the matter, sir, are you crying?"***

Towards stage-left.

Child? Yes, I had a boy. He was adopted by a respectable family. We were living literally from day to day then, often without enough to eat. So much worry that my milk dried up in the end, and he was put into care at some Christian orphanage in Bunkyō district; yes, I remember now, it was called the Orphanage of the Holy Mother.

Towards stage-right.

"To tell the truth, my circumstances are just like your son's: I too was sold to a stranger as an infant, and I don't know if I have a brother or a sister, or even any relative at all; that's why I was so moved by your story. But by some good fortune my foster-father was a kind man, like a Buddha but with a dagger at his side and a tattoo on his back: he cherished me and raised me like his own. All the same, ma'am, I bear a grudge, I hate the mother who abandoned me."

She listens to a line from the other (probably very short), and responds:

"But why did she bear me at all if she was so ready to abandon me? . . . Your son would probably say the same."

She listens and responds.

"I would rather have been killed than abandoned. The mother kills her child in desperation, unable to bring herself to give it away: that is the mercy of a true mother, isn't it?"

Looks towards stage-left.

WHAT—WASN'T MY BOY adopted by the Yokoyama Electrical Shop in Hachiōji? Honestly, you do go on with your silly questions; can't you find anything better to do? The nurseries don't tell you the details of where your child went; that avoids any trouble between the adoptive and natural parents later on. The matron said to me, "Don't worry, your child will be adopted by a respectable family. But if you want to change your mind, this is the time: Will you take the child back or send him away?" I cried and cried for a whole half-day till my tears dried up, feeling half-grateful and half-dejected. But, just supposing—mind you, it's a big "if"—supposing someone or other's child really was adopted by the Yokoyama family, what of it? . . . I see, the Yokoyamas had a child of their own in time and, not unexpectedly, began to ill-treat their adopted son. Well, well . . . and what happened next? . . . The boy left home when he turned fifteen and he's been missing ever since. Ah, it's a heart-rending story even for a stranger. But this boy Tagami Haruhiko eventually came up in the world, and became a star, isn't that right? So the story has a happy ending, three cheers!

Towards stage-right.

"'How can you tell a motherless child', do you know that children's song? It goes on, 'He stands in the doorway, sucking his thumb'. In the dusk, you watch the circle of children playing together, squatting in the doorway, sucking your thumb, crying because you are left out . . . that's a lonely feeling for any child . . . ."

Turns towards stage-left.

A photo? Tagami Haruhiko always carried an old photo next to his heart, all the while eking out a living from one downtown restaurant job after another? A photo of a mother holding a baby? And it shows the corner of something like a costume box in the background? Are you seriously suggesting the mother's face in the picture somehow resembles mine? Come on, mine's a very common face with eyes looking like almonds; how can you be sure? I see, the mother's face in the photo is rubbed off? Because of the boy's caressing and stroking it every day? You really make my heart bleed! What—? None the less you can see the character *tsuki* on the costume box in the background? Look, just because the box has *tsuki* written on it, it doesn't mean that it says *Sa-tsuki*. It could be *tsuki-mura* or *tsuki-gata* . . . .

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She looks towards stage-right, at some distant point. She raises her hand to respond, and shifts her eyes to the point at stage-right where Ichikawa Nakamaru is supposed to be.

Did you hear what Toshi just said, Grandpa? With a bit of a last-minute rush, we may have a full house tonight. Isn't that wonderful? What a break! ***"Even a mourning child, bereft of his mother, has some mementos left to remember her by, like her tattered*** kimono ***or a straw sandal with a broken strap. But for an abandoned child, like myself, there was not even a shadow of a memento . . . it was heart-breaking."***

Towards stage-left.

Me, frightened? Frightened of what? Of being reproached by my abandoned son? I'll tell you, what I am really frightened of is rain at curtain time, that's the only thing. Now, would you mind not disrupting our rehearsal, please?

Towards stage-right.

"Indulgent parents who coax the crawling child to stand and the standing child to walk . . . how I longed to find parents like that somewhere, some day. Night and day, in the frosty morning and the stormy evening, I used to pray to the gods, to Buddha, to the Sun and Moon, joining my tiny hands like maple leaves . . . . Then, as I came to realise that my wish would never come true, I turned blasphemous: the gods don't exist; Buddha is the most merciless villain of all; may the Sun burn itself out and the Moon drown herself . . . ."

The old woman of the mountain tea-hut cries at this point, Grandpa Nakamaru; she really does break down pathetically. Isaburō is taken aback, ***"Well, well, I got carried away. Your son will be different, he is not a ruffian like myself; he couldn't possibly speak such harsh, hurtful words. However much he might reproach you at first, that will pass. I assure you, he will soon be crying out 'Mother' even as he rebukes you, for his hatred is only skin-deep, while his heart is crammed with voices saying 'I've missed you; I've longed for you'. Deep down he is sure to be thinking, 'She must have had some powerful reason to abandon her child. The old poem says: 'Though there are a thousand different bonds of love in the world, none is stronger than that felt by a mother for her child.' It's cruel to blame the mother who had to sever that bond and abandon her child. She must have suffered ten times more than I . . . ."*** The old woman of the tea-hut who doesn't realise that her own son, having poured out all his resentment, has just called her "Mother", says, ***"How happy, how happy I'd be if my son felt the same way. Sir, thanks to you, the heavy weight pressing on my heart these twenty years is lifted. It's amazing how light-hearted I feel now; even my body feels lighter. Well, it's time for*** **sake**, ***yes, time for*** **sake**. ***You must have a sip of my home-made*** **sake**. ***Won't take long, it'll be ready right away."*** Left alone, Isaburō ponders, ***"Because of the murder of that sheriff, I am a homeless fugitive, fleeing today eastwards, tomorrow westwards. Were I to declare myself openly, I'd cause more trouble for my mother; she would be caught up in my crime. Forgive me, mother, I had no other way to reveal myself. What's this . . . a money-box. Good, in go 20*** **ryō** ***and my precious talisman, and farewell*** *(she strikes the first note of "ki"[7]),* ***I take my leave*** *(the second note of "ki").*

She strikes a dramatic pose or "mie"[8] as the departing Isaburō, but immediately glares towards stage-left.

INDULGING MYSELF? Me, self-indulgent, how? Eh? I'm punishing myself by playing the abandoned son who rebukes his mother? I don't know what the hell you're talking about . . . . I see, I'm purging myself within the safe framework of a play, am I? And I even let the son forgive his mother in the end? That's how I'm indulging myself? That's why I play this part so often, just to ease my conscience? Why don't I come out of the play to face reality, and confront Tagami Haruhiko? Well, thanks very much, but it's none of your business. Those were terrible days—the audience didn't turn up; the troupe members had to be fed; the debts were piling up, and that damned husband I was relying on ran out on me; there was no other way. *(Having been exposed, she is now very agitated.)* Gouged by loan-sharks, harassed by men, I cried, I bled; I crawled in order to survive. *(Realising that she has let herself go too far, she tries to get a grip on herself.)* Well, everyone, our guest is leaving. Will someone escort him to the front? . . . What's the matter? Could someone please take our guest . . . . *(She explodes.)* Where is everybody in this play!? *(Returning to a normal tone.)* Toshi, dear, open the window, let's have some fresh air.[9] *(As her eyes follow the departing TBS man)* . . . It wasn't a matter of throwing away an object, but a child, your own baby you had borne in pain; a mother had to be deadly resolute to go through with it. And having gone through with it, how could any mother be so shameless as to go along to a reunion, just because the child has come up in the world? How could she dare face her . . . . *(Suddenly.)* My son was adopted by a family in Iwamisawa, Hokkaidō. He graduated from high school, got a job at the Iwamisawa railway station . . . and died in an accident. When I rushed to his bedside, he looked at me and said, "Life is like that, isn't it, mother." He smiled sadly, and died. At that moment a shooting star fell from the sky outside the hospital window . . . .

A sad "mie". At this moment, some indescribable sound is heard. It sounds like "ki" and then it doesn't. She stops the tape, and makes an announcement herself loudly, "Thank you very much for waiting. Tonight's first play by the Satsuki troupe, *Isaburō's Parting,* will commence shortly." *Then she starts a new tape, this time of rather old-fashioned melodramatic music, for the opening of "Isaburō's Parting".*

She looks into the mirror, then as she walks slowly towards stage-right, carrying a straw hat:

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[7] A traditional percussion instrument, in which a sound is produced by clapping together two hard rectangular pieces of wood. This sound is usually heard at the beginning and end of the performance in the traditional theatre.

[8] A pose like those observed in the *Kabuki* performance.

[9] The Japanese version here is *Shio maitokure:* "Sprinkle some salt", meaning "Purify the bad atmosphere left by the man from the TBS". Traditionally, salt has been one of the most common purifiying agents used for ritual purposes. For example, before a *sumō* wrestling match (which is said to have been performed originally for the purpose of divination) the wrestlers still purify the ring by sprinkling salt.

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Grandpa Nakamaru, and everyone, I'm counting on all of you. Let's give them a heck of a performance.

She halts at the wing stage-right; when the music stops, she runs off, the straw hat held high over her head. After a few seconds:

"Father!"

The lights dim slowly.

TOWARDS THE END of the interval, during which the curtain does not fall, the last few lines of "Isaburō's Parting" become gradually audible from the direction of the right wing, i.e., the direction of the stage on which it is being performed.

". . . Because of the murder of that sheriff, Isaburō is a homeless fugitive, fleeing today eastwards, tomorrow westwards. Were I to declare myself openly, I'd cause more trouble for my mother; she'd be caught up in my crime. Forgive me, mother: I had no other way to reveal myself. What's this . . . a money-box. Good, in go 20 ryō and my precious talisman, and farewell *(the first note of 'ki')* ***I take my leave*** *(the second note of 'ki').*"

The sound of "hyōshi-maku" (a crescendo "ki" clapping which slows down as it becomes louder) suggests that she is ending her performance with a great "mie". Scattered applause. A few whistles and shouts from the audience—for example: "Bravo, Yoko!" "Satsuki, you made me cry!" "Keep it up, Yōko!" "You're the greatest!" *For some reason, all the voices are male.*

Soon she comes back to the dressing-room in Isaburō's costume. She wears a wreath made out of thousand-yen banknotes and her straw hat is filled with paper-wrapped tips thrown on to the stage by the audience. She lights a cigarette and takes a deep breath:

What an enchanting audience.

She enjoys the moment. The medley of "enka" begins.

I'd forgotten how wonderful it tasted. A smoke after a job well done—it's heavenly.

She takes off the wig and looks at a point stage-right.

Nakamaru, darling, you were pretty good too. Well, actually, more than "pretty good"; you really did respond splendidly to my impassioned performance. I do thank you for that. However, I'll have to have those tips[10] in your *kimono* sleeves, if you don't mind. No use trying to hide them now, dear. I saw three packets thrown in your direction. Haven't you noticed I've got eyes in the back of my head? You can't cheat me. As the head of the troupe I'll take all three of them. I'll look after all the tips until we finish here, and then distribute them fairly among us. Haven't you worked in the popular theatre long enough, dear? I'm sure you are familiar with the back-stage custom that tips from the audience are handled by the head of the troupe. So why pretend innocence. Really, one can't drop one's guard even for a moment nowadays . . . .

She has been watching her straw hat reflected in the mirror as she touches up her make-up, but:

Wait a minute, Grandpa, how many packets did you just put in the hat? Three? That's all you have? Don't lie to me, darling. You only dropped two in, not three. Please put the other one in too, like a good boy. That's it, well done, thank you. Toshi, keep them somewhere safe, will you? And what's happened to my tea? You haven't brought a hot towel yet, either. Toshi. . . !?

She looks around the dressing-room, but freezes like a pinned butterfly as she looks at a point to her left. She stays frozen for a considerable time, but eventually she begins to move in response to the "figure". They appear to be locked in silent confrontation for a while, trying to place themselves in a more comfortable physical position. But soon the "figure" seems to park himself at a point stage-left (where the man from TBS was apparently seated in the first act). Towards stage-right:

. . . Toshi, I recognise this young man. Haven't you all seen his face on TV or in the magazines?

Towards stage-left:

YOU'RE TAGAMI HARUHIKO, aren't you? I thought so. You were watching our performance? Good gracious, I'm surprised the audience didn't make more fuss. *(She turns towards the mirror.)* We watch as well, you know; we watch the audience from the stage like hawks. You see, we have to spot at a glance those customers most likely to throw us a tip, and strike a dramatic pose as close to them as possible. But I didn't see your face there . . . . I see, you were watching secretly from behind the food stall? Ah, no one would have seen you, then.

As she chatters away, she touches up her make-up, pretending to be calm. But she reveals her true feelings in her shaky hand and in the way she does her make-up. She tries to retouch her eyebrows but she ends up drawing one on her forehead, when Tagami Haruhiko says something.

What's that? You'd like to see the talisman I've just used on stage? *(She laughs.)* You won't find it by looking around there. That talisman and the striped purse I used at the end of that scene are my important props: I usually bring both of them back to the dressing-room myself. *(She laughs again.)* Look, the only thing you'll find among the tips in that straw

[10] *Ohineri:* paper-wrapped tips thrown on to the stage by the audience—still a common practice in the traditional popular theatre.

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hat is the purse. The talisman is my most precious prop of all . . . or, rather, my blessed guardian, a crutch for my heart to lean on. So, when I'm not on stage, I keep it like this *(takes it out from her breast)* right in here. This talisman of the goddess Kishibo never leaves my body, not even for a moment.

Suddenly she seems to be grabbed by her left arm.

For heaven's sake, don't be so rough!

But the "figure" on her left is strong, and she is dragged off the stool in front of the mirror. She fights for her talisman, trying not to let the "figure" have it.

You'll break the string, you're pulling my head off! Look, I'm not going to run away from you or hide, am I? What? The pouch of my talisman looks just the same as yours? *(She looks intensely at the talisman shown her by the "figure".)* It's true, the string as well, the same strands of purple, orange and white . . . . Then, then . . . .

She snatches her talisman away as she withdraws, and sits down with her hands placed on the floor before her.

Supposing it is, what about it? . . . Twenty years ago, you were left at the Holy Mother Orphanage in Bunkyō district; it was early December; you were just three months old. Your natural mother left with you that Kishibo talisman, together with a photo. And that Kishibo talisman looks the same as mine . . . .

She sits with her face turned aside as if she were avoiding a sandstorm. Painfully:

Mother . . ! ?

She does not move for a while. Or rather she cannot move. Tears fill her eyes, and seem to dissolve away the defensive armour she has worn up to this point.

Forgive me. . . . I know, you can't possibly forgive me but please, Tatsuo, I beg you. These past twenty years, there were days when the cocks didn't crow but there wasn't a day I didn't think of you. I thought of you the whole year round, without a break. If my heart were made of bamboo, I'd cut it open to show you the inside. . . . On cold autumn mornings when dead leaves fell in the wind, I was afraid that you might catch cold and in my mind I'd place my hand on your forehead; on hot summer nights, I'd worry that you might be kicking off your blanket, so in my heart I'd tuck you in. . . . Tatsuo is your name. Your father's and grandfather's stage name was Tatsutarō, so we took "tatsu" and combined it with the "o" in "hero". The matron of the orphanage said, "It's a fine name but the people who adopt him might want to give him a different name. And of course he will be officially registered as the son of his adoptive parents." Since you didn't recognise your real name, I suppose they did change your name after all, as the matron said. Of all the troubles in life, poverty is the worst; because of it I couldn't do many things a mother would do for her child. But I'm proud that at least I gave you a luxurious and exuberant name. If I had been your adoptive mother, I wouldn't have changed your name, not your name; because it's a fine name. . . .

She moves back three feet or so while remaining seated.

DON'T GLARE AT ME like that. Please, don't be angry with me. If I'd known you were here, I wouldn't have told the man from TBS that I didn't know you. . . . Besides, now you're finally shooting up to stardom, I didn't want to hold you back by suddenly intruding into your life. For me it was enough to know that the darling baby I bore in pain has now grown up to be a fine young man. So, I was just going to watch you from a distance, to fast and pray to the goddess Kishibo that your popularity may last forever. That's why I sent the man from TBS away. . . .

Her face lights up as if electricity has just passed through her body.

Never mind? You no longer bear a grudge against me!? It's been hard for you, but I must have suffered a hundred, a thousand times more? . . . How sweet you are!

Her voice cracks with emotion and she draws closer to her "son".

But it's you who've really suffered; it must have been a thousand, no, a million times harder for you. You can do whatever you like to me. Beat me, if that will clear away your anger. Yes, beat me, beat me, beat me until my face is swollen like a goblin's.[11] Tatsuo. . . !

She embraces her "son" and breaks involuntarily into a lullaby that she used to sing to him.

". . . Sleepy, sleepy, sleeping babe,[12] a crab's just crawled up your arse." Whenever I sang this lullaby, you used to get very excited. . . . "Even though I fish it out and throw it away, it crawls back once again. . . ." You don't remember it; you were only a few months old at the time. "Once again I fish it out, then boil it in a pan and eat it up." I was frightened. A reunion of mother and son after twenty years—it sounds good, but I didn't know what to say to apologise; anyway I was sure you'd never forgive me. That really frightened me. So I was determined not to go along with what the man from TBS was saying. If I'd known you were so kind-hearted, I'd have listened to him more readily. He was a good man and I was wrong not to listen to him. . . . "Though the crab's been thoroughly boiled, it still stinks to high heaven."

As if tapped by someone, she looks up over her right shoulder:

[11] The Japanese version is *Yotsuya-Kaidan no Oiwa-san no yōna kao ni shiteokure:* "Make my face like that of Oiwa in *Yotsuya-Kaidan". Yotsuya-Kaidan* is a popular *Kabuki* play by Nanboku Tsuruya (1755-1829), in which the heroine Oiwa, slowly poisoned to death by her husband, haunts him after her death, appearing with a horrific face deformed by the effects of the poison.

[12] The Japanese word is *neko*—which is a pun, having the double meaning of "a sleeping child" and "a cat". Hence, the last phrase of this lullaby is *yoku nita kani-nanoni, dōnimo neko-kusai:* "Though the crab's been boiled thoroughly, it still stinks like a polecat." The pun cannot be conveyed in English, so it is translated without any reference to a cat.

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What's that, Toshi, love? Time to get ready for the next show? No, I haven't forgotten; though I think I'm going to hold the curtain for ten minutes or so.

Looking towards stage-left, sternly:

What's that, Nakamaru? The audience'll get restless if they're kept waiting too long? Who's worried? Don't forget, we have a food kiosk by the stalls just for that reason. If they get bored, they'll buy something to eat; that's the whole attraction of our sort of theatre, didn't you know? I'm sure the kiosk woman will come around after the show to thank us all for taking an extra long interval; just wait and see. Yes, that's it. . . .

She moves away from her "son" and speaks to the members of the troupe stage-right.

I CAN WEAVE all the details of our tearful reunion into my speech to the audience. *(Rehearses her speech, pretending the troupe members are her audience.)* "Ladies and gentlemen, welcome, welcome to our performance tonight. Will you please accept our sincere apologies for the unusual delay in starting our next number, *The Tale of the Hairdresser Shinza.* But, ladies and gentlemen, there was a very good reason for this very long delay. That's right; during that long interval, a real-life drama, just like the one we performed for you earlier tonight, was unfolding in our dressing-room before our eyes. Indeed, as they say, 'Truth is stranger than fiction.' In the dressing-room of this very theatre, Satsuki Yōko has just been reunited with her long-lost son, after twenty years. Tears, tears, tears . . . we were drowning in our tears; the mother held her son's hands, the son clasped his mother's shoulders, and we cried to our hearts' content. Naturally, the interval had to be extended. Yet, Satsuki Yōko is a true child of the theatre, born, bred and schooled in the dressing-room; moreover, she is sworn to her father's credo: 'Come fire or flood, the curtain must go up.' She should have raised the curtain on time, no matter what was happening in the dressing-room, a reunion of mother and son, or a double suicide, the whole place awash with blood. That being said, ladies and gentlemen, Satsuki Yōko is only human, daughter of a mother and mother of a son; she could not keep to her father's credo. To compensate, if you'll excuse this impertinent expression, I shall now bring my son on stage and have him say a few words of greeting to you. 'The son of a frog is a frog; the son of an actor is an actor'—my son, ladies and gentlemen, is none other than the rising young television star Tagami Haruhiko. . . ."

Towards stage-left:

It's all right to say something like this, isn't it? You will come on stage beside me and speak to the audience, won't you? Just a few words will do. You will? Wonderful! This is going to cause a real riot; they'll turn the place upside down. And tonight is only the beginning; I'll bet all the papers and TV shows will be full of our story for a while, I'm sure of it. . . . *(Continues with her speech.)* "Quiet, quiet! Ladies and gentlemen, please be quiet. I would like to say just one more word before I bring Tagami Haruhiko on stage: it's about what finally proved he was my son. *(She grins at the audience coyly.)* Yes, you'd like to know, wouldn't you? My son, that is, Tagami Haruhiko, had two mementos of his mother, a photo and a talisman of the goddess Kishibo. But aren't I a bad mother, I didn't remember the photo at all. The only thing I remembered was the talisman . . . it's all coming back now—it was early December, twenty years ago; I was taking my son to the Orphanage of the Holy Mother in Bunkyō district; on my way I stopped at the Kishibo Shrine in Iriya to pray to the goddess, the blessed patroness of children and child-bearing, and got two talismans wrapped in identical pouches: I put one around the neck of my baby and the other around my own. . . ."

She is crying, and after a while she wipes her tears with the back of her hand:

I'll probably end up crying on stage too.

To stage-left.

If I start crying, don't mind me but just come on stage. What, darling? You'd like to see my talisman once again? Why not.

She hands it over to her "son" stage-left, and sits in front of the mirror.

In any case, it's really about time we raised the curtain for the next show.

However, she is so happy that she can't help looking at "her son" stage-left with a big smile. Turning to stage-right, towards the members of her troupe.

LOOK AT HIM, take a good look at him, everyone. This is my child. Isn't he beautiful—so handsome!? Even I, his mother, could fall for him. What's that, Nakamaru dear? For my son, he doesn't look a bit like me? *(Laughing).* Well, it's like the duck giving birth to a swan, wouldn't you say? *(Repairing her make-up.)* Well, my darling Tatsuo. . . . No, better call you Haruhiko, hadn't I? Well, now that we've finally met, shall we set up house together? Frankly, for all her vigour, Satsuki Yōko is a little tired: I made my début in the spring of my sixth year; it's been forty years since, and I haven't had a single day's break; I'm really worn out, body and soul. Sure, I'll earn as much as I can cashing in on *The Reunion of Mother and Son* for six months or so. But beyond that, well . . . can't you guess? You must have a nice girl-friend. . . . Not at the moment? But you'll soon find one. The girls won't leave you alone. With that handsome face of yours, it'll be more difficult avoiding them than breaking into the Bank of Japan. First a girl-friend; then along comes a baby—that'll be my grandchild! How I'd love to hold my grandchild in my arms! And to baby-sit for him! All my life, I've been like a floating leaf on the river, drifting here and there; every day was like crawling naked through a thorny hedge or walking on the blades of swords; I'm tired to death of it. My dream of dreams is *(she speaks with deeply felt emotion)* to sit on a sunny veranda with a grandchild in my arms, "Sleepy, sleepy, sleeping babe, a crab's just crawled up your arse. . . ."

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She looks towards stage-left as if a bomb has just been thrown at her:

The talismans don't match? Yours is a Kishibo talisman from Zōshigaya?

She smiles coyly.

Iriya and Zōshigaya. Not much difference; they're both Kishibo talismans, aren't they? That's good enough for me.

At this moment, there comes the sound of demolition from the direction of stage-left. And the voices of demolition workers: "Hurry up, luv, you've got to hand over the dressing-room." "If you don't move out, you'll get hurt, you know." "We can't finish the job till we knock down the dressing-room." "Oh, heck—What shall we do?" "She keeps repeating the same old act, all by herself—doesn't she get tired of it?" "Hey, Satsuki, come on out!" "Yōko, if you'll just come out, you'll be the greatest!"

The sound of demolition continues. She looks towards stage-left:

Tatsuo, where are you going? If it's the loo, it's to the right of the stage-door.

She sees him off. From now on, she no longer recalls her son. Or rather, she has forgotten all the events in her "real life" since reaching this point in her opening night at this theatre. That is to say, she is a lonely, mad woman who only remembers these happiest ten minutes or so of her life, and is repeatedly reliving alone the events leading up to this blissful moment.

Hey, Nakamaru, I've just had a flash of inspiration. Why don't we do a sequel to *Isaburō's Parting* instead of our next number. Don't worry, it'll be a great hit. Can we go over the lines quickly while we touch up our make-up? Don't miss a single word. Ready? Pay attention.

She touches up her make-up as she rehearses the lines but she merely messes it up by, say, painting one cheek red, drawing a cross on her forehead, or painting the tip of her nose blue.

Towards the end of the scene, I try, that is, Isaburō tries to leave the tea hut after putting 20 *ryō* and his talisman in the money-box, doesn't he. But the old woman, that's the one you are playing, who we thought went off to warm up some *sake,* turns out to be listening to his confession. So she rushes out and clings to Isaburō. ***"I never guessed . . . you are my son. . . !"*** Isaburō is taken aback; he stands speechless, stunned at this unexpected turn of events. Now, from this point on, the stage is all yours for a while, darling. It's a very good part. ***"When I recall the countless words of rancour you spoke earlier, my blood runs cold and I feel as if I'm being torn apart. . . . I realise nothing I say now can make amends, but still, forgive me, Isaburō."*** The old woman of the tea-hut joins her hands in supplication. ***"I beg you, with all my heart; there were days when the cocks didn't crow but there wasn't a day when I did not think of you; every day I would take out my talisman—look, exactly like yours—and caress and stroke it, praying for your happiness. . . ."*** The old woman takes off her talisman and hands it over to Isaburō. For that, we need another talisman, don't we? Toshi, dear, can you get us another talisman? Toshi! . . . *(She explodes.)* Why doesn't anyone come! ? . . . Why. . . .

Sounds of demolition work.

Now the audience is starting to riot. I'll have to go on ahead of you, Grandpa. ***"So you are a notorious sheriff-murderer on the run. All the more reason, then, for you to take refuge in this tea-hut. They say, rumours die in 75 days and in 100 days the wind will clear the sky. From that day on, you can mend your ways and lead an honest life.***[13] ***And then, take a wife. Then I can retire happily, living out the rest of my days looking after my grandchildren. I know it's wishful thinking but take pity on a mother who cannot help dreaming. . . ."*** At this moment, Isaburō reels back: ***"In heaven's name, does God exist no more? The talismans don't match! Mine is from the shrine in Iriya, but this is from Zōshigaya, west of Iriya. Everything else fits perfectly but the talismans themselves do not. . . . Well, old mother, the wise old saying says life wouldn't be life if one could fulfil all one's wishes. We have to learn to accept it. Now I must be on my way."*** Isaburō starts to make his exit, but at the sight of the old woman so distressed, so lost in her grief, he cannot bring himself to leave . . . no, no, better still, he is drawn back to the tea-hut; listen, Grandpa, this is your big moment. Play the scene with such feeling that we know, if the old woman is left alone, she will go mad and die.

She has completed her "grotesque" make-up. The mad woman picks up her straw hat, cape and sword:

The last line is mine: ***"Old mother, wipe away your tears; they say, every time you grieve, you shorten your life by three days. Well, ma'am, how about this: Isaburō is seeking a mother who abandoned him and you are seeking a son whom you abandoned; so if we become mother and son, we'll fit each other happily, like a broken cup pieced together. I'll mend my ways and lead an honest life; I'll carry water and cut wood for you; I'll take a wife and raise a family; I'll rub your back when you grow old. Won't you let this Isaburō do what your son would do for you?,,***

She becomes the ecstatic mother:

"Isaburō. . . !"

She becomes the ideal son:

"Mother. . . !"

Amidst the noise of demolition, the mad woman is at the zenith of her happiness. The lights slowly dim.

[13] *Nari aratamete,* meaning "change, renew or reform one's appearance" with regard to the hair-style and the type of *kimono* one wears. The phrase makes sense in the context of the Edo period, when the *yakuza*—though townsmen (as distinct from members of the military or peasant classes)—wore different types of *kimono* and hair-style from those of the *katagi* townsmen. *Katagi ni onari:* "become a *Katagi*". *Katagi,* the opposite of *yakuza,* refers to the law-abiding and correct way in which ordinary townsmen lived.

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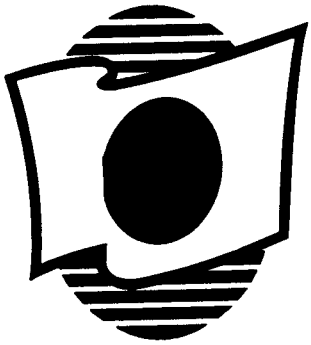
Brian Moeran

Homo Harmonicus & the Yenjoy Girls

Production & Consumption of Japanese Myths



THERE IS A SENSE in which airports may be said to be prisons. They are frequently protected by barbed wire, separated from the outer world by tunnels, and patrolled by armed men who appear to have a penchant for conversing *sotto voce* with the lapels of their uniforms. Narita International Airport is no exception to this rule. Surrounded by electrified fences and barricades, by batteries of arc lamps, by security checks and armoured vehicles with searchlights, water-cannons, and grilles over their windows, this complex of dark-grey, military-looking buildings warns all who pass through that they are entering or leaving the island of Japan. Those who remain are subject to its culture and must abide by its laws. Like Heathrow, Kennedy, or Charles de Gaulle, Narita forms a gateway to its country's prison culture.

The guardians of this particular prison culture have hitherto been very strict in their administration of its inmates. For about a century now, successive governments of Japan have propagated an image of their country as being totally different both from its geographical neighbours and from its Western rivals in trade. In the eyes of both the Japanese themselves and of Western observers of Japan, this image has clearly set the country and its people apart from other advanced industrialised societies. Cleverly making use of Western images of "the Orient", which were largely nurtured by an escapist longing for whatever advanced, complex, Western civilisation was not, they have bombarded us with a set of ideals that, taken together, more or less constitute Edward Said's analysis of "Orientalism" in inverted form.

In their numerous publications that point to these differences between themselves and the West, the Japanese have created a literary genre in *nihonjinron* (literally, "discussions of the Japanese"), whose rhetorical techniques include a refusal to account for human plurality and the attribution of positive values to characteristics which were once used as a form of denigration by Westerners writing on the Orient. Thus, "the West" is lumped together into one indistinguishable social and cultural mass, and adjectives like "simple", "emotional", and "child-like" are made to do semantic somersaults as the intellectual acrobats of Japan's myth-making process create an ideology in which simplicity is seen as strength, irrational "heart" is favoured over rational "mind" (together with "Oriental spirit" over "Western materialism"), and the undifferentiated social world of "the primitive child" is transposed into an all-embracing social harmony in which individuals subordinate their interests to the primary group to which they belong. *Ecco homo harmonicus!*

In this way has an absolute and systematic difference been established between Japan (which has its own rationality, morality, systems of democracy, economy and art—all of them superior) and the West (which is over-rational, amoral, too individualistic for the good of society—and hence inferior). During the post-War decades, the Japanese have turned the tables on their would-be material and spiritual conquerors. Their inverse Orientalism is now a force so strong that it can persuade Western businessmen to reconsider their hitherto class-based managerial methods; British politicians to examine the Japanese education system just when, ironically, the Japanese Ministry of Education is restructuring that system along the lines of British-inspired "individual creativity"; and European craftsmen to see as the new aesthetic prophet a man whose ideas about "folk art" were largely based on the writings of William Morris and the British Arts and Crafts Movement.

At the same time, as anyone who has looked at its advertising and tourism will know, Japan's male population is led to believe that foreign women embody the same fecundity, sexual promise, untiring sensuality, and unlimited desire that are seen by Westerners to characterise Oriental women in general, and the Japanese *geisha* in particular. What was once the persuasive art of the State has become, in Panasonic's equally persuasive words, "the state of the art".

IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES, it is difficult to know where or how to begin an analysis of contemporary Japanese society. But, given that the Oriental image has been essentially "feminine", we may be well advised to look at the roles of men and women in Japan today. Eighteen years ago, when I first returned to England after a three-year stay in Kobe, I was accosted in the train at Dover by two "Sloane Rangers" who, when they heard where I had come from, exclaimed: "Oh, Japa-an. I say, have you seen that mountain? What's it called now? Kilimanjaro!" (To which the other replied tartly: "Don't

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be so silly, Priscilla. Kilimanjaro's in India. . . . Isn't it?")

This long-held image of Japan as a country whose beauty is epitomised by Mount Fuji, *geisha* girls, the tea ceremony, and cherry blossom still holds good today, although it is accompanied now by a more masculine set of images which include the equally "orientalised" *yakuza, shōgun,* and *sumō* wrestlers, on the one hand, together with those delights of the financial and economic experts—*endaka, kaisha,* and *sōgō sōsha*[1]—on the other.

But do any of these images constitute the "real" Japan? After all, Japanese society is so complex—both in its institutions and in its mixture of eastern and western "traditions"—that it is doubtful whether any set of ideals would do it justice. Sometimes, of course, one suspects that it is not justice with which Westerners writing about Japan are particularly concerned. After all, the 90-minute bus ride from Narita to the centre of Tokyo offers the hard-pressed journalist a catalogue of things on which to sharpen his wit—whether they be love-hotels topped by a statue of liberty or built in the form of a cruise ship, or road signs picturing a smiling baby asleep in the apartment blocks that rear over the highway and the request that drivers proceed "quietly".

It is true that he would be wise to keep in mind London pub roofs capped by castle-bearing elephants, and road signs warning drivers along a fast stretch of dual carriageway that blind persons may be crossing, but there is little *en route* between Narita and Tokyo to show that Western stereotypes are wrong and that the Japanese do *not* live in "rabbit hutches", that their capital does *not* have fewer parks than any other metropolis of its size, that they have *not* paid a price for their country's remarkable and rapid economic growth.

THERE IS A favourite haunt of mine—a stretch of green promenade with flower-beds and fountains in the centre of Sapporo, in the northern island of Hokkaido, where couples pause to eat grilled corn-on-the-cob, watching their children playing on the grass, or teenagers imitating the antics of Japan's modern pop stars, the *tarento* (talent). Here there is a statue of three naked women, whose arms are raised high in ballet pose above their arching breasts. The statue, entitled *Izumi* (fountain), was apparently donated by the Nikka Whisky Company, and is photographed minute by minute throughout the day by visitors who take it in turns to pose in front of this contribution to culture—men standing upright to attention, adopting the posture of members of the army that their country is not constitutionally allowed, but which is found nevertheless in the military-style organisation of their places of employment; women with their hands placed neatly in front of them, covering up the form of their bodies most demurely.

It is things that are set apart—statues, buildings, fountains, mountains—that are photographed and thereby framed for posterity in each individual's life. At the same time, this framing is precisely that of Japanese society as a whole. In many respects, Japan is like a film: a series of celluloid frames in which each individual's actions are frozen for observation. Just as Narita Airport is fenced off from the land that is Japan by its barbed wire and barricades, so too are people and objects separated into neatly compartmentalised frames through which they view their own and others' lives.

Primary-school children, for example, are recognised by their uniforms and short-cropped hair, allowed to grow only when they shift to secondary education (and then depending on whether they live in town or country, and are scholars or sportsmen). University students, for their part, affect the casual "West Coast" look, as girls exchange high-school pigtails for "natural" shoulder-length hair, blown into thick black waves. Young mothers, on the other hand, cut their hair short and make the daily trip to the supermarket in ankle-length white socks and slippers, while their *sararimen* (salary-men) husbands wear two- (and their senior colleagues three-) piece suits and well-oiled hair. Finally, old men potter round the house and neighbourhood in singlets and long-johns, while their wives shuffle forth into the outer world in sombre *kimono*. Such are the major scenes in the film of a Japanese life.

Clothing may in this way mark gender, age, and status; but it is also used to delineate other temporal and spatial frames. Take hats, for example. Just before passengers are invited to board domestic flights, when they take their allotted seats prior to take-off, and when the plane has finally landed, female personnel working for Japanese airline companies all put on hats of various types—bowler, garden-party, Aussie-style (without the corks), depending on the company and season. Hats frame beginnings and endings, the coming-together and separating of people in Japan.

So, too, with gloves—worn so distinctively by taxi drivers and car-park attendants, and by wedding-hall masters of ceremony and department-store elevator girls. Finally, there is footwear—the shoes that are left at the entrance to a house, and the slippers that are changed between a corridor and a toilet, or between a *tatami* mat and a wooden kitchen floor. Thus do the extremities of the body (head, hands, and feet) mark the boundaries of social interaction. The human body becomes a metonym for society.

It is usually *women* who act as mediators between these frames, they—or their taped voices—who greet you in buses, banks, and department stores. Women place lidded cups of tea on the low table around which men are about to engage in business discussions (discussions which have been framed among themselves by the exchange of name cards); women pass little trays across the counters at which they sit, and enable money, tickets, bank-account books to be conveyed from one individual to another; women serve the decorated plates and bowls with which each meal is punctuated. It is women, too, who are taught to master the language of mediation—those set phrases of greeting, gratitude, apology, and farewell which strictly mark each scene, and guide Japan's well-rehearsed actors from one social frame to the next. Men mark the inner and women the outer spaces of each frame.

The thing to remember about Japanese society is that it is not an individual's attributes that count so much in his everyday behaviour, as the social context in which he finds himself. Chameleons of the East, Japanese would deny that the Western leopard actually has any spots to change. In their

[1] Respectively: the rising value of the yen on the world market; company; and general trading company.

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eyes, it is the subtle combination of light and shade which in certain circumstances makes the animal *appear* to have such a distinctive attribute. Given this emphasis on contextuality, it is perhaps surprising to find that the two things for which the Japanese should be so renowned in the West are photography ("All Japanese tourists have at least two cameras") and film (Ozu Yasujirō, Kurosawa Akira and Mifune Toshirō).

At the same time, one would have thought that attitudes in Japan would be hard to change. After all, the images of "cooperation", "consensus", "subordination of self-interest", and so on, which are characteristic of *homo harmonicus* and which form what is now frequently referred to by earnest social scientists as "the group model" of Japanese society, are images that are based on small-group behaviour before being applied to society as a whole. And since small-group behaviour is ruled by context, and context ruled by small-group behaviour, it would seem that the Japanese are locked into a splendidly Mencian circle within whose circumference they are all destined to behave *ad infinitum* in the manner to which they have become accustomed. Now that the images of inverse Orientalism have been successfully created, there is no room for change.

SUCH CIRCULAR REASONING is apparently supported by people's preparedness to accept instructions. At least, the comparative lack of *graffiti* in a country whose cities are models of cleanliness suggests that people rarely actively object to being told what to do. Even then, the form in which such objections are phrased *("Warning to passer-by. It was a freak of mine to wear pink pajamas. 'A man had better live at will'")* may parallel that delicate mixture of requests, information, commands and advice found in everyday life.

Taxis, for example, have any amount of reading matter for passengers to take note of before reaching their destinations: a colour photograph of the driver on the front windshield above the meter, together with details of his name, number, date of birth, and name of the company in which he is employed; on the dashboard below, a notice addressed to "front-seat passengers" telling them that they are required by a law, which came into effect from 1 September 1985, to fasten their seat-belts; on the panel behind the driver's well-cropped head, another notice certifying that the taxi has been duly disinfected at monthly intervals, together with the vermilion seal and name of the employee who had carried out the job. Advertisements for taxi company coupons and a credit card company can be found in plastic pockets hanging from the back of the front seats, together with the notice: "PLEASE HELP YOURSELF TO THE PAMPHLETS." Around each of the rear door handles are the stickers "PUSH TO OPEN", "IF YOU PUSH, THE DOOR OPENS", and "DANGEROUS TO OPEN", while other stickers on the side windows remind passengers of the minimum fare of their particular taxi, and of the 20% surcharge payable by those riding between the hours of 11 p.m. and 5 a.m.

In the superior taxis known as "hire"—where the driver is photographed wearing a black bow tie, white shirt, and dinner jacket—a television set is located above the driving mirror, and a remote-control panel on the back of the driver's seat. On the window is a sticker inviting passengers to make use of the telephone on board by asking the driver to dial the number required. On the door is another notice advising them where to get in touch if they lose anything while riding in the taxi, and which credit cards (Visa, American Express, JCB, KC Credit, Million Card, Diners Club International and Union Credit) they may use to pay the bill. And just in case they should be carrying cash (which in fact all Japanese do, in large quantities), there is a small box on the panel between the front and rear doors suggesting that loose change can be used to buy wheel-chairs for disabled children.

Such dense information is not only visual. On station platforms, passengers are greeted with spoken announcements which first warn them that a train is approaching, and that mothers should ensure that their children stand back from the edge of the platform. They then inform everyone what the train is, where it is going, and at what time it will depart, before reminding all passengers not to forget anything and requesting them to refrain from smoking. Once inside the train, they are warned that the doors are about to close (a warning reiterated by a loud buzzer on the platform outside), before being told which train they have boarded, its time of arrival, and what stations it will call at. Passengers are also advised from which side of the train they should alight at each station, as well as being reminded from time to time that there is no smoking, and that those without seats should hold on tight.

This apparently insatiable desire on the part of contemporary Japanese to relay and soak up gratuitous information sometimes reaches absurd proportions. In the lobbies of hotels, airports, and city terminal buildings, for example, people can watch medical experiments or cooking lessons on one of two television sets, and listen to a news programme on another set nearer at hand, while being lulled by background music emanating from a shopping arcade nearby.

One has cause to wonder at times whether *homo harmonicus*'s seeming propensity to act like an automaton is not induced by this very density of information, rather than by the Confucian ideals of "loyalty", "cooperation" and "diligence" which are generally seen to be the guiding factors in the development of Japanese personality. Certainly, the combination of visual and audial messages would seem to be a force strong enough to anchor Japanese society to the bedrock of authoritarian control. The principal function of such anchorage is, as Barthes has pointed out, ideological: the filmic text directs its viewers towards meanings that have been chosen in advance.

OR IS THE TEXT a con? Is there something happening in Japan of the '80s which threatens to put an end, once and for all, to the Oriental myth upon whose ideals Japanese success, and Western failure, have been predicated? One way to find out is to look a little more closely at relations between men and women in contemporary Japanese society, since it is here that the Confucian drama of "family" and "work" is most clearly staged.

The lot of women in Japan has never been an easy one.

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It is true that both the country's founder, Izanami, and that other luminary of mythology, the sun goddess Amaterasu, were female; true, too, that in ancient Japan women had sufficient status to become empresses when the need arose; but both Buddhist and neo-Confucian ideals have over the centuries served to put women very firmly in their place. Taught that their only hope of salvation lay in being reborn as men, and that they owed loyalty first to fathers, then to husbands, and finally to sons, women have since the feudal age been encouraged to believe that their only role in life was that of "the good wife and wise mother" *(ryōsai kenbo)*.

In theory, Japan's defeat in the Pacific War put an end to the pervasive notion of "honour men and despise women" *(danson johi)*. In 1945, for the first time, women found themselves being given the rights to vote, to be educated on an equal footing with men, and to take up senior posts in local government. Two years later, the Labour Standards Law provided equal pay for all employees doing the same work, regardless of their sex; it also limited the amount of overtime and night work that women should do, and stipulated that they should be given twelve weeks maternity leave. Their legal "freedom" was finalised in 1948, when the Civil Code promulgated by the American Occupation Forces permitted Japanese women to inherit property, marry whom they pleased, and file for divorce.

ONE MAJOR problem in post-War Japanese society has been that changes affecting people's lives were imposed from above (the Land Reform, for example, and the dissolution of the *zaibatsu*—the financial conglomerates), rather than arrived at by a process of "natural" social selection. So, too, with women. In the first few decades after Japan's opening to the West, they were obliged to fight for their rights, only to find themselves being *given* these rights at the end of the Pacific War. Of course, this gift of "freedom" was welcome enough, but we should remember that it also came wrapped with a Western label. As a result, it has taken Japanese women a very long time to adapt this behavioural model to their own Japanese ideals.

As with Japanese society as a whole, then, it is still hard to tell precisely how far superficial material changes are affecting the inner "spirit" of Japanese women. Do the Burberry coats, Celine dresses, Gucci bags, and Yves Saint Laurent scarves reveal, as the Parco ads suggest, the emergence of a totally liberated type of Japanese women? Or does she remain underneath the sweetly smiling, patient, homely wife despised by honoured men? After all, most of the simpering voices that greet passengers on buses, visitors to banks, and shoppers in department stores are those of women. It is they who tell you how much to pay the automatic ticket-vending machine, or to mind your step and hold on to the handrail as you get on an escalator. Theirs is the voice of instruction—inviting you to sample a bottle of wine, to try this particular brand of shampoo, or to imitate their swim-suited and televised selves by stretching your body into various contortions in the middle of the afternoon tea break. Women are the educators of Japan. They are the ones who protect you from danger *("abunai desu kara . . .")*, who keep you safe *("anzen no tame. . .")*.

Despite all this, evidence suggests that the 1980s have seen a fundamental shift away from the stereotypic images of "honour the man, despise the woman" and "good wife and wise mother" (an image, incidentally, used by a British Heinz Baked Beans advertisement in 1937). Part of this shift is due to the continuing processes of urbanisation and technological development, both of which continue to assist in the breakdown of traditional family ideals, and consequently in the loosening of women's hitherto primarily domestic role. At the same time, it is part and parcel of a growing awareness that women have been *the* wasted resource in Japan's post-War labour market.

OVER THE PAST FEW decades, it has become the norm for young women leaving high school to go on to two-year junior colleges, where they can pick up such wifely arts as domestic science and English literature. Then they graduate to take up jobs in which they have been expected more to beautify drab offices than to take any serious part in a male-orientated career structure. Obliged to retire once they got married, or at least when they became pregnant, Japanese women found themselves being taken out of the labour market in their mid 20s, only to re-enter it (if at all) in their mid 40s or 50s as poorly paid, part-time workers. During the intervening years, they were mostly confined to the home. Those women who did decide to pursue a career usually had little choice but to forget about marriage—a bleak alternative in a society in which a woman's status had been defined by her ability to give birth to sons.

And yet important changes *are* occurring. The average age of marriage for women, for example, has been creeping steadily upwards: from 24.5 years in 1965, to 24.7 in 1975, and 25.5 in 1985. The percentage of unmarried women has also increased, to the extent that nearly one in four girls between the ages of 30 and 34 in Tokyo, and one in ten throughout the country, have refused to tie the Shinto (or any other) wedding knot. For those who do follow the still customary and encouraged path of marriage, there are other changes which affect their married lives. Fifty years ago, women did not expect to live too long after seeing the last of their children through school or—possibly—university. Now the chances are that they will survive another two or three decades after their children leave home. This is partly because of the huge increase in life expectancy, and partly because they no longer bear as many children as their mothers and grandmothers. Whatever the cause, they want to do something with their lives.

This desire for change is giving rise to a number of modal "types" of housewife whose interests can be located in domesticity, the family, sociability, and independence. The Hakuhōdō Institute of Life and Living has referred to these types as *My House Mrs, My Home Mrs, My Friend Mrs,* and *My Self Mrs.* Ten years ago, in the mid-1970s, the "traditionalist" *My House Mrs* could be associated with rural areas, and the "neo-traditionalist" *My Home Mrs* with urban areas. Nowadays, the difference between them is no longer so clear-cut. In a classic "catching-up" situation, rural women have started socialising more freely with one another

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in an attempt to become "neo-traditionalists", while urban wives themselves have sought to further their independence as "new women", or *My Self Mrs.* We are thus witnessing a double shift: country women are emulating city wives who in their turn are searching for a new identity, focusing on themselves, rather than on others (husbands and children) and operating in the public, rather than domestic, sphere.

One steadfast principle of our information age is: when in doubt quote a few statistics. This can prove to be heady stuff when dealing with Japan, where there are approximately 62 million women, of whom 49 million are over 15 years of age and therefore legally capable of work. The actual number of women working full time is 23 million, with a further 15 million employed on a part-time basis. Nine million of the country's 30 million housewives are at present earning an average of ¥65,300 (approximately £300) a month.

MORE THAN 15 million working women are aged between 18 and the late 20s. They are referred to in Japan's highly active domestic-consumer market by the catchy phrase, "*Yen*joy girls". According to a survey conducted by the Hakuhōdō Advertising Agency in 1986, more than 90% of these women claim to be "happy", while two out of three work "for fun", "not to get a salary so much as to be able to enjoy themselves with the money earned". It would seem that, for women, employment has little to do with that ethic of hard work and diligence characteristic of the post-War male "workaholic". Rather, they see it as helping young women to "develop themselves" and to "balance work with play". Money is made to be *used,* and pleasure is not seen by this "new species" *(shinjinrui)* to be a "luxury" in any way.

The *Yen*joy girls form not just a very large but a very wealthy sector of Japan's consumer market, and they spend their money on entertainment, eating out, leisure, and travel. For example, about half of the eight million or so tourists who went abroad last year were women in their 20s. One in four were university students; one in three OL, or "office ladies". On average, Japanese girls manage one-and-a-half trips abroad during their liminal period prior to marriage, and on each trip they spend about ¥500,000 (£2,300). For a young secretary in the City, perhaps, such expenditure would be seen as "luxurious", but her Japanese counterpart regards it as normal. To spend any less would be to counteract the new ethic of "*yen*joy".

No wonder, then, that an increasing number of young people are choosing not to get married. Known as *anmari-kun,* or unmarrieds, one in two big-city girls in their late 20s, and more than one in five in their early 30s, realise that they have probably got another 50 years ahead of them before they die, and so feel no need to rush into marriage. Anyway, they can hardly be enchanted by what they see in a housewife's life. As a result, they are asking questions like: "Why be slave to the notion of family and lose out on the best part of your life?" "Why become a *Cinderella Mrs,* able to escape from bobby-sox and slippers into rented Dior dresses for a few hours once a week, only to leave a glass slipper on the station steps as you rush to be back home before 11 pm?" "Who in her right mind wants to be a pregnant pumpkin at the age of 25?"

For those who are already married, one way out of the dilemma of being closeted at home with a family is for housewives to go out and work. This has become possible, of course, because of the shift from traditional household to nuclear family system. But other factors have speeded the transition from domestic housewife to "*hobbysiness* woman". These include the dissemination of ultra-modern household electrical products—like the *Shizuka Gozen,* the brand of washing machine which is so quiet that it enables a working wife to do her washing in the evening without disturbing the neighbours. Then there has been the introduction of instant and fast foods, together with the gradual weaning of women from the notion that all food should be fresh. What with the development of such household services as the notorious baby hotels, nappy hire, and party catering, a housewife's working time has been cut from seventeen hours a day before the War to approximately three now.

Women are thus able to barter money for time, and to use that time to go out and enjoy themselves (the sociable model) or to make more money (the independence model). This in itself is encouraging the growth of what are known as the *katakana*[2]—the leisure and service industries (takeaway restaurants, sports clubs, convenience stores, credit-card facilities, dry cleaners, delivery companies, "aesthetic salons", and so on).

Another result of housewives going out to work has been that their financial position within the family has been strengthened (if only slightly). This in turn allows them to combat any residual feelings of *danson johi* that their husbands might harbour towards them. That there are such feelings is clear from the Hakuhōdō Advertising Agency's 1984 survey on married women, which showed that a very large percentage of husbands objected to their wives going out in the evening, and that they still did not cooperate that much when it came to household chores.

Still, things are looking up. A recent annual survey conducted by the Prime Minister's Office revealed that, for the first time ever, fewer people agreed (36%) than disagreed (41%) with the statement that "A man's place is at work, and a woman's is in the home". Maybe this is what is meant by the new era of *Heisei*[3] with its promise of peace.

THE REEL OF FILM flickers towards its end. Nothing has truly been settled. As one friend put it, somewhere on a long drive between two distant points connected by shopfronts, hoardings, and telephone wires: "The one thing that never makes any progress is the relations between men and women." So, too, with foreigners' understanding of Japan. Totally incapable of knowing whether the Japanese really are becoming more individualistic (whatever that may mean), more subject to a system of social class, and hence

[2] Since the leisure industries derive almost entirely from the West, the words of Western origin used to describe them are written in the *katakana* syllabary which is reserved for foreign words (other than Chinese).

[3] In Japan, the name of the era changes with the death of the Emperor.

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more likely to confirm the Western capitalist experiment; or whether all changes merely act as a superficial gloss on the mirror of "tradition" and Confucian ideals that have hitherto sustained *homo harmonicus,* we can only hazard a more or less haphazard guess. Given the present rate of change, and assuming that the neo-traditional *"retro-būmu"* (retro-boom) is yet another passing phase of nostalgia that accompanies such change, one would expect a "new Japan" to come into its own in the 1990s.

Of course, this Japan will no longer be peopled by those exotic beings who so enchanted a young man prior to his unexpected lesson in geography on a train at Dover so many years ago. Things are different now. As the same friend said, with his squirrel-like penchant for putting things in a nutshell: "Dad plays golf. Mum goes off to the Culture Centre. The son plays with his family computer. His younger sister's a gang leader. His elder sister's sleeping around. Grandad plays gateball [a Japanese version of croquet], and Granny's off to the hot spring. *That* is Japan." In the meantime, this archetypal family inhabits a "fairy-tale land" *(otogi no sekai),* full of medieval castle love-hotels, magnificently decorated *pachinko* parlours with their vertical pin-ball machines, and bespectacled shops selling spectacles—all in the midnight purples, undressed pinks, and garish greens beloved by the ravaged bride of the Orient.

When the Mizuki restaurant celebrated its second anniversary, the owner invited his most regular customers to a special Sunday lunch. The restaurant itself was no more than a narrow bar, on which was set an array of dishes—roast chicken, sliced and decorated with orange; a large copper trireme on whose deck were lined *hors d'oeuvres* and *canapés (pâté, vol-au-vents,* curried eggs, and salmon roe); silver trays of cold jellied meats and vegetables—a magnificent spread that had kept the three chefs (whose varied status was signified by the height of their hats) occupied until three o'clock that morning.

The guests duly arrived, one after the other—men dressed in cowboy jackets and string ties, or well-tailored white shirts and black corduroys; women in brand-name dresses or leather skirts, with colourful coats whose hues matched perfectly their lipstick and nail varnish. This strange mixture of Japanese and Western elements was further enhanced by the course of the afternoon's events. The toast, for example, and the speeches that preceded it were at the beginning rather than the end of the meal. The slices of ham were embedded in strawberries. The roast beef could be taken with a flavoured soya sauce or with horse-radish, and was accompanied by *onigiri* (rice balls) and *takuan* (pickled radish). The guests served themselves with silver forks and spoons, but ate their food with wooden chopsticks, and drank whisky right through the meal. This fairy-tale world was added to, but uninterrupted by, the *karaoke* "empty orchestra" songs which guests were invited to sing as they ate and drank, totally unaware that they were indeed participating in an *otogi no sekai* of reconstructed truth (albeit in the guise of "culture").

IT WOULD SEEM that Japan is destined to become a living Disneyland. Given that Japanese society is like a film, that Walt Disney produced cartoon (and other) films, and that millions of Japanese read *manga* strip-cartoons every week, this is not surprising. Like the "real" Disneyland in California, the living Disneyland not only produces illusion (the Oriental myth), but, in its advertising of that myth, stimulates the desire for it. Japan is—in Umberto Eco's words—"an ellegory of the consumer society, a place of absolute iconism".

Those of us who pay our entrance fees (in the form of airplane tickets) and pass through the gates of Narita must agree to behave like its living Disneyland "robots". Whether wandering in the maze of an underground shopping centre, swaying at the top of Tokyo Tower, or dancing to the ghetto-blasters in the streets of Harajuku, we, too, can savour total passivity, the ultimate fake of hyperreality, where "the real thing" turns out to be, not that blinding flash of Zen enlightenment so much as Tom Stoppard metamorphosed into a bottle of Coke.

For this the sound of one hand clapping. . . ?

Night

The moon declines. The winter clouds are hung
like moral information on the town.
They drift across the stars, that glitter, strung
like atoms of anxiety. I frown.
Walk backwards to the bed. My mind's a rite.
I touch your limbs in order, white, yet warm,
as Luther did. It keeps away the night.
Once you seemed a bliss divorced from form,
but now your body's sprawled across the bed
like lust assuming substance. Once you were
my perfect girl. You took me from the dead.
The noon sun shone at midnight. Now you blur
with dread, with *horror vacui*. Immense
abysses of a lifting immanence.

John Gurney

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Yasunari Takahashi

Visionary Gleams

Japanese Theatre Since the 1960s

STATISTICALLY, there is little doubt that Tokyo is the world's largest theatre town, even surpassing New York. Probably there are many Japanese, especially outside Tokyo, who would be surprised to know that there are in their megalo-capital about 250 theatre companies, about 120 plays put on every month, and about 60 acting spaces. This includes large companies which produce a play per month, and tiny ones which may disappear after a single show; productions ranging from new plays to *Noh, Kabuki, Bunraku,* and foreign plays in translation; and small studios or other spaces turned into *ad hoc* theatres as well as regular playhouses.

Statistics, however, is a dreary and deceptive business—revealing more about economics than about culture. One can go for that sort of information to the Japan Foundation or the Japanese Embassy. What matters is the significance of theatre in the context of contemporary Japanese culture, and here quantity must give way to quality, for only the best in quality, though few and small in scale, would offer an insight into the problem. And since, in my view, much of the best in the Japanese theatre in the late 1980s derives from the "revolution of the theatre" which took place twenty years ago, any serious attempt to understand the issue cannot but begin there.

There are a number of scenes, if I may start on a personal note, which spring up to my memory as I cast my mind back to the late 1960s. A couple still retain special vividness: one is centred on the figure of Yukio Mishima, the other on that of Arnold Wesker.

In May 1969, a year before his all-too-famous suicide, Mishima accepted a challenge by a group of radical students of Tokyo University (where I happened to be a young assistant professor) to hold an open debate with them on their campus. I managed to sneak into the packed auditorium and, in a tense yet strangely exhilarating atmosphere, watched and listened to the fascinating harangue in which the "ultra-nationalist" novelist manifested his sympathies with and differences from the radically Leftist students. The students had, earlier in the year, achieved a spectacular *succès de scandale* in their rebellion when they were expelled by the police force from the clock tower—the symbol of the University and of intellectual authoritarianism—which they had been occupying for some weeks. (It was a really "spectacular" event, watched avidly nation-wide on the TV screen.)

Mishima told the students that he was all for their attacks on the system of modern values authorised by universities and characterised by the false "affluence" of contemporary Japan; he would, he said, gladly have joined them in their occupied "citadel" if only they had cried "*Viva* Emperor!"—which got a great laugh.

A few months prior to the fall of the "citadel", in September 1968, the project called "Wesker '68" had invited the British playwright to Tokyo to discuss, in a symposium involving half-a-dozen theatre directors and critics of Japan, the situation of theatre in contemporary society and what could be done to change it. I was on the platform, sitting beside Wesker, whispering into his ear as simultaneous interpreter, and interpreting him aloud to the other panellists and the audience. There were misunderstandings on the part of the Japanese about British political and theatrical conditions, and vice versa—which entailed some futile though vehement exchanges of attacks on each other; but there were moments when the sheer force of the critique of the status quo, if not an outline of the possible strategies for "revolution", was movingly communicated. (Quite a few faces on the floor on this occasion could be recognised among the audience at the encounter with Mishima).

THESE EPISODES go some way, I believe, towards evoking the kind of milieu in which a new theatre movement was getting into full swing. In a sense, it was part of the global phenomenon of the revolt of the youth in the 1960s. The students' strike in 1968 at the Medical Department of Tokyo University preceded the "May Revolution" in Paris by four months, although without, in all probability, any consciousness of prophecy or synchronicity. By the end of the year, however, no less than 116 universities and colleges in Japan were under-

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going "campus turmoils", and the students were fully aware of global solidarity in their revolt against academic authority as well as in their denunciation of the Viet Nam War and their admiration for the Beatles.

At the back of it all lay a profound disagreement with the system of modern Western or Westernised values. In theatre, the younger generation in Japan were reacting no less keenly than their Western counterparts to the contestations of modern realism by Artaud, Brecht, Beckett, Genet, Arrabal, Grotowski and Julian Beck, as well as Wesker.

Nevertheless, it would be wrong to ignore those factors which were specifically Japanese. For instance, no account of the new movement in Japanese theatre in the 1960s would be complete without stressing the importance of one political event: the parliamentary ratification of renewal of the Japan-United States Mutual Security Treaty (ANPO) in 1960. The failure to prevent renewal meant not only a débâcle for the whole of socialist power in the political scene; it also compelled intellectuals to rethink their political standpoint. On those young people in the theatre, barely twenty years of age, who had been actively committed to the anti-ANPO campaign, the effect was double: the traumatic experience irrevocably cured them of the Old Left dream and, by the same token, brought them into a violent clash with the orthodoxy in modern Japanese theatre. The orthodox modern Japanese theatre known as *Shin-geki* (literally, "new theatre") had allied itself politically with socialism since pre-War days, and had adopted socialist realism for its artistic method, though another stream alongside it held a less political and more Chekhovian stance of psychological realism. The defeat suffered in 1960 determined the young people's search during the following decade for an alternative theatre with a radically different ideology and methods.

IT WAS IN THE 1960s that the so-called "High Growth Period" started. A comparatively higher standard of living had considerably dampened the ideal of "post-War democracy", to the chagrin of the Socialists and Communists, and had consolidated the political supremacy of the Liberal Democratic Party. On the other hand, it did not strengthen the sense of national identity. People just seemed to have started drifting, borne along by a new dream of affluence, but at bottom uneasy and uncertain in the aftermath of the disillusionment of 1960.

This is what lay behind Mishima's apparently only half-serious, but deeply-felt, appeal to the students. But the sociological fact had an ironically rich significance for the emerging new theatre. Japan in the 1960s was on the one hand becoming affluent enough—or just about—to allow the aspiring youth to indulge in their own small-scale theatre activities. At the same time, what would now be called "the post-modern era of playfulness" had not yet set in. The moral and intellectual atmosphere, combined with psychological uncertainty, was earnest enough to encourage questionings of everyday reality and deep probings into Japan's cultural identity; there was an urge to talk of eschatology and utopia (Wesker's title, *Their Very Own and Golden City,* had a special ring to it); of Beckettian futility and yet of a need for transcendence; of madness and carnival. Nowhere did all this bear more stimulating and substantial fruits than in the new theatrical movement of the young.

A cursory look over a chronological table of the late 1960s makes one realise the phenomenal importance of the period. One encounters there all the charismatic names that were to revolutionise the theatre scene in the succeeding decades.

In 1966 Tadashi Suzuki, leader of Waseda Sho-gekijo (Waseda Little Theatre, later re-named SCOT), makes his directorial début with a play by his friend Minoru Betsuyaku.

In 1966 Juro Kara, leading Jokyo Gekijo (Situation Theatre), directs his own play, achieving the first in a long series of semi-outdoor productions in a famous "red tent theatre".

In 1966 Makoto Satoh declares the foundation of Jiyu Gekijo (Free Theatre) with the production of his own play. The company, later renamed Theatre Centre 68/71, is commonly known as "Black Tent".

In 1967 Shuji Terayama, founder of Tenjo Sajiki, directs his own play.

In 1969 Yukio Ninagawa, founding Gendaijin Gekijo (Modern Man's Theatre), produces a play by his friend Kunio Shimizu.

In 1970 Shogo Ohta, leader of Tenkei Gekijo (Transformation Theatre), directs his own plays for the first time.

THESE YOUNG LEADERS did not rally round common political slogans, whose lies they had come to know only too well. The most explicit in political awareness was Makoto Satoh, whose plays—such as *My Beatles* (1966) and *Cinema and Phantom* (1976)—are probably the best embodiment in Japan of the ideas of the New Left, in a brilliantly Brechtian style. His most recent directorial work (1988) was Brecht's *Threepenny Opera,* which he completely transformed into a story about Japan at the time of the Meiji Revolution; the great success of the production confirmed that he was still a most devoted Brechtian in spirit and style. What marks the passage of time is the fact that, besides remaining the energetic leader of the "Black Tent Theatre", he is now also among the most sought-after directors of Western opera (most recently Berg's *Lulu*) in the large commercial theatres of Tokyo.

Though far from being unanimous in espousing "the theatre of revolution", the young theatrical avant-gardists shared a passionate belief in a "revolution of theatre", a revolution which should be total and far-reaching, aiming at no less than a transformation of the consciousness of the audience. No one was more tirelessly experimental than Terayama in challenging the accepted relationship between performance and audience. His transgression was so bold—e.g. *Blindman's Letter* (1973), performed in total darkness; or *Knock* (1975), which literally took the streets for an indeterminate stage where actors roamed about according to a rough "time-schedule"—as to cause scandalised citizens to sue him. But it would be wrong to see only a theatrical *enfant terrible* and scandalmonger in an artist who was a true avant-gardist if ever there was one, and a fascinating "hunter of theatrical images" (in the phrase of the reviewer in *The Times* of the performance of his *Direc-*

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tions to Servants at the Riverside Studios in 1978). Teryama's death in 1983 might be interpreted as symbolic, in that he was the only one among the young visionaries of the 1960s who refused until the last to acclimatise to the all-powerful commercial milieu of the 1980s.

Perhaps it was Tadashi Suzuki who did more than any other to bring about a radical re-examination of concepts involving acting and text, actor's body and mind, theatre and culture. And he did this not by critical theorising alone but also, and more powerfully, by directing. The work which established his reputation in the "little theatre movement" was *On Dramatic Passions, Part 2* (1970), a collage of scenes from *Kabuki* and other Japanese drama as performed by a Japanese variant of "mad woman in the attic".

SUZUKI won a wider recognition with *The Trojan Women* (1974), in which he used for the main roles a *Noh* actor, an actress trained in the tradition of *Shin-geki,* and a leading actress of his own company—thus creating a clash of acting styles which forced as it were deconstructive rethinking upon both actors and audience. The work also successfully employed a "framing" device whereby the Euripidean play was performed as a fantasised vision of an old Japanese beggar, a woman loitering in the streets of burnt-down Tokyo immediately after World War II. After Terayama's ultra-avant-garde plays, this was the first contemporary Japanese production to tour Europe (including performances at the Riverside Studios in 1985) and America, to great critical acclaim. Suzuki leads the increasingly "internationalising" trend in Japanese theatre today, with his activities such as founding the annual Toga Festival (which has so far invited Robert Wilson, Tadeus Kantor, Lee Breuer, Welfare State International, etc.), lecturing at Juilliard in New York, and producing his boldly reduced all-male version of *King Lear* with a mixed international cast.

Another influential director is Yukio Ninagawa, a name quite familiar by now to British theatre-goers. His fame in Japan has long been associated with the playwright Kunio Shimizu—their early collaboration in productions like *Such a Serious Frivolity* (1969) has now become legend as a most moving portrayal of the revolutionary generation. After a period of separation, they again started working together, and *Tango, at the End of Winter* (1984), for instance, bore eloquent witness to Shimizu's unfailing dramaturgical skill in mixing memory and reality, yearning and despair, as well as to Ninagawa's staggering manipulation of the dynamics of the stage.

Ninagawa is also a witness to the devouring power of time in the sense that, alone among his rebellious colleagues, he has proved himself capable of success in big commercial theatres —something totally unthinkable before his advent. His first venture in this new direction was *Romeo and Juliet* (1974), followed by *King Lear* (1975), *Oedipus Rex* (1976), a new version of Chikamatsu's *Kabuki* plays (1979), the famous *Macbeth* (1980), *Medea* (1985), and *The Tempest* (1987).

The only other name in Japanese theatre today that can claim international recognition is that of Shogo Ohta, whose completely silent piece, *Water Station* (1981), has more than once toured Europe and America. Another major work, *Komachi Fuden* (1979), which is intended for performance on the *Noh* stage, consists mainly of an old woman's silent re-enactment of her memories. These apparent *tours-de-force* make a significant contribution to theatre in general because of the amount of participation which has to be extracted from the audience in order to make it possible for the theatrical experience to exist at all. But they are of particular interest to the Japanese because they seem to tap the deep root of the nation's aesthetic sensibility: the aesthetics of silence and void, the refusal to articulate, or the body's resistance to *logos*.

Ohta may resemble in this those Butoh dancers whose grand master, Tatsumi Hijikta, seeking the basis of his art in the decrepit body discarded by the mind in the process of modern civilisation, learnt a great deal from the primitive forms of *Noh* and *Kabuki*. It should be stressed here that Japanese theatrical modernisation started in the Meiji era with a conscious denial of the indigenous tradition of performance. Be that as it may, it is a sad pointer to the state of culture that Ohta, unable to maintain his ascetic activity any longer, was last year forced to disband his troupe.

Juro Kara's revolt against modern intellectualism was arguably fiercer than that of any other Japanese playwright. Though European surrealism was one of the great influences on him, his instinctive sympathies were blatantly committed to the eroticism, freedom, and yearning of popular imagination. His dramatic text, incredibly sophisticated and breathtakingly spontaneous, matched well with the magical power of his actors' "privileged body", which he famously eulogised. His works, ranging from the series of "John Silver" plays (1965-68), *The Mask of the Maiden* (1969), to *The Black Tulip* (1983) and so on, continue to be a stubborn thorn in the affluent theatrical flesh of contemporary Japan.

LAST BUT NOT least, Minoru Betsuyaku is exceptional in the list of experimentors of the late 1960s in that he alone was and remains a pure playwright, an ascetic in his own right, never involved in any king of "movement". He started his dramatic career under the decisive shadow of the absurdist theatre, especially Beckett. But he was quick to realise the dangers of the cul-de-sac that it might lead him into, and has developed a unique style of his own whereby he can treat serious subjects such as the sufferings of Hiroshima *(The Elephant,* 1962) or a family crisis involving the killing of an old woman by her grandson *(The Cherry in Bloom,* 1980) with the same perfect expertise that he shows in dealing with abstract problematics such as the nature of social institutions *(Conference,* 1982). What this style might possibly remind one of would be, if anything, that of Pinter. Betsuyaku's quietly methodical mind seems to set his work apart from the vociferous and often amateurish stagecraft of the younger generation.

So those are the "big names", or the so-called "first generation of the little theatre movement", all of them born between 1935 and 1943. They are the ones who, having brought about the "golden age" of experimental theatre

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twenty years ago, now constitute the solid core of theatrical creativity.[1]

A few words about a solitary figure from the same generation: Hisashi Inoue. He did not belong to any of the "radical" groups, nor did he come from the modern Westernised *Shingeki* tradition. His roots were in popular vaudeville entertainment, which he refined with something of a Brechtian verve. But it would certainly be quite unfair to disregard the sheer joy he has given to theatre-goers in the past two decades, with his fantastically complex chinese-box dramaturgy (*The Navel of the Japanese*, 1969) or his savagely entertaining portrayal of evil (*Yabuhara the Priest*, 1973). And he is still prolific.

ANOTHER playwright who resists classification is Rio Kishida. Having long worked for Terayama in many of his important productions, she triumphantly established her own fame with the performance of her play *Itojigoku (The Hell of Threads)* in 1984—a hauntingly realised story of Japanese women working in a weaving factory, and one which only the female imagination could have produced. Other female playwright-directors to be mentioned, even though in passing, are Koharu Kisaragi (*Doll*, 1983) and Eriko Watanabe (*Gege-ge-no-ge*, 1982), though they are to be grouped with the "third generation".

The "second generation", comprising playwright-directors now in their early forties, tried to establish their difference by shedding the tragic gestures and revolutionary visions of their immediate predecessors and concentrating on the scaled-down ordinary realities of life. The most prominently talented among them was Kohei Tsuka, whose special importance, however, lies in the fact that he was at the same time responsible for tipping the balance in favour of the following generations. It was his play *The Atami Murder Case* (1973) which turned the tide by pushing the interchangeability of fiction and reality on the stage to the furthest extreme. His characters were intent on playing roles with a dizzying and desperate devotion which somehow both madly intoxicated the audience and left them excruciatingly blasé. That was his way of provoking what he considered to be the growing complacency of Japanese society; and when he thought his "malice" no longer worked, he left the theatre to become a novelist and work in films. Last March, after seven years' absence, he came back to the theatre, with a new play about a film actress. It remains to be seen whether he has found the times sufficiently changed to stimulate him into continued exercise of theatrical "malice".

It would be too scholastic to dwell on the distinction between the "third" generation and the "fourth". Suffice it to say that, despite the differences in individual talents, they do share certain characteristics: a lack of serious concern with social reality, or rather a precocious awareness in advance of the futility of all efforts; an abundant energy of playfulness which might be labelled "post-modern" in contradistinction to the "anti-modern" or "pre-modern" concerns of the "first generation"; a science-fiction-oriented fascination with eschatology or imagery of androids, and so on. The forerunner among them is Hideki Noda, whose company, Yume-no-yumin-sha (Idle Dreamers), performed his play *Descent of the Beast* in Edinburgh in 1987. Following him closely in both vitality and popularity are Shoshi Kokami's troupe, Daisan Butai (Third Stage), and Takeshi Kawamura's troupe, Daisan Erotica (Third Erotica).

The present prosperity of theatre in Tokyo, unprecedented in Japanese history and probably unrivalled in the world, owes much to these young playwright-directors. One would, however, be rash to state categorically how much of their work is ephemeral, and how much of enduring substance.

[1] They truly merit to be known abroad, and it is more than time that an anthology of their plays in English translation (which I hear is now in preparation) was published. So far as I know, Tadashi Suzuki's essays, collected under the title of *The Way of Acting* (New York: Theatre Communication Group, 1986), David G. Goodman's *After Apocalypse: Four Japanese Plays of Hiroshma and Nagasaki* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986) which contains Betsuyaku's *The Elephant* and Satoh's *Nezumi Kozo: The Rat*, and Goodman's *Japanese Drama and Culture in the 1960s* (New York: Sharpe, 1988) containing Kara's *John Silver* and Satoh's *My Beatles*, are all that is at present accessible to foreigners.

Home

It seems we have arrived. Or, more,
the place arrives in us, a cool
waking to the smell of pinks and cloves,
to milky twilights standing at the door.

That sense of nothing changed—the cold
metalwork of starlings on a wire
and neighbours' houses huddled in the dawn
like broken clockwork toys, the old

memories of streets and garden fires
and rain-laced windows watching us for years,
expecting some event, just making fit
our incomplete deceptions and desires.

John Burnside

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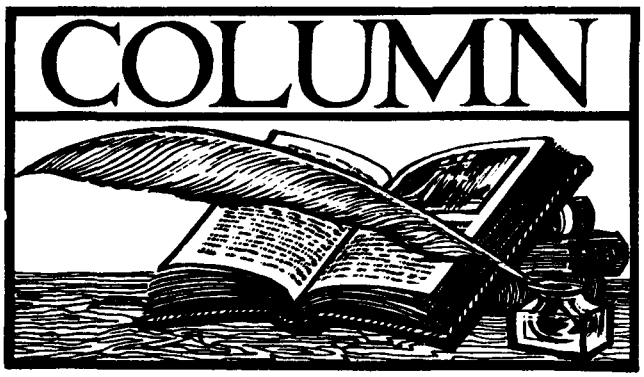

DEAREST B.,

We've been going around together for so long that I think people are starting to talk. Oh, I know we're both adults, and that neither of us would win second prize in a beauty contest, even on a *Monopoly* board. And, to tell the truth, you're no sylph, with those horizontal rolls of fat—not to mention your big round spectacles. Still I've got used to them; and I actually *like* your rubber gloves and boots. Call me kinky and see if I care.

But since this is an open letter, maybe I should spell out your name. Bibendum, presiding genius of the Michelin Guides: THIS is for you. A letter of thanks and appreciation; a few suggestions; and a test-drive report on some recent travels in Italy with you.

In most of Europe, I seldom travel without you. Not just the big red hotel-and-restaurant book, but the tall, slim green guides with *un peu d'histoire* and *die Sehenswürdigkeiten*—now embellished with colour photographs and practical tips on opening hours collected handily in the back. I confess I've been unfaithful from time to time, trifling with the affectations of Gault et Millau, signing up with the AA, ogling Egon Ronay, romping with the Good Food Guide, and even trying bondage with Nagel and Baedeker—as well as a frisk with Penguins now and then. But always, as in the Hoagy Carmichael song, the road leads back, leads back . . . to you, my bountiful if not beautiful Bibendum.

Your charm is partly your crispness. Some weeks ago, on the BBC radio programme *Desert Island Discs*, where hypothetically marooned celebrities are asked to choose eight records, a luxury, and a book to accompany the Bible and Shakespeare, already supplied by the island's management, an eminent and sensible lady insisted on the Bible in the Authorised Version of 1611. "None of that nonsense", she added, referring to drabber modern texts. It sounded just like you. "Interesting." "Worth a detour." Worth the journey." Or not, as the case may be.

This is quite a contrast with chattier guides, which gabble on about old Peppino, who may well poke his head round the kitchen door to see that everything's all right in the charming, vine-clad, noisy but picturesque *trattoria* that bears his name (and may have changed hands since the guide was printed). Indications like "rather pricey" or "in the jet-set league" are useless compared with your own numerate price parameters, very seldom breached. Once one's learned the code and its interpretation, your advice is always sound.

Mind you, the proviso's important. Of all your recommendations, I vastly prefer restaurants "with rooms". Hotels which insist on one's eating at least one meal in their restaurant are mostly to be avoided, however cheap their full or half-board rates: but the converse is ideal. If you say a good restaurant has rooms, you mean decent rooms; and, for my parsimonious money, oblivion in any bedroom is unimportant compared with a good meal downstairs.

When younger and greedier, I used to look for rosettes, as I think you call them: most readers think of them as "stars". But the last time I ate in a one-rosette restaurant, in northern France, the food was indifferent, expensive, and absurdly pretentious: the spun-sugar sweet looked like a sculpture by Paul Klee, and it also punctured the gums. I'm likewise wary of two or more spoon-and-fork symbols alongside a restaurant: they often connote money spent on décor rather than food. Nowadays, I head for your red R signs (red *Pas* in Italy), indicating good food at moderate prices, or the black diamonds implying positive cheapness.

My last pet hate, as a private traveller, is your tiny figure of an orator at a microphone on a rostrum. This shows that the hotel has a conference hall. In other words, it's ceased to be an inn and has turned into part of the business circuit, with plump, florid freeloaders in name-tags and a haze of alcohol, besieging the lobby when one wants to order an early call. I keep away from these establishments—except, of course, when I'm one of the freeloaders. But on those occasions, Bibendum dear, I don't bring you along.

Could your big red book offer other services? Your true devotees, it seems, do nothing but eat, sleep, and admire. How about a little night life? You could grade low dives with one-to-five stockinged legs. What about shopping? Cash tills for cost, ribbon bows for quality. And for younger, poorer travellers, why not fast-food joints, scoring by the number of hamburgers or greasy spoons?

Don't think I'm complaining. Other guides make a stab in these directions; but the problem is to keep up with change. Night-spots shift and vanish far faster than acne; boutiques spring up like mushrooms and die like mayflies; rapid eateries come and go. So perhaps you're wise to remain conservative. Your faithful admirers are the old-fashioned type.

EQUALLY OLD-FASHIONED, until recently, were your green tourist guides. With them, I have one general quarrel: they're too tall to disappear into a handbag or the side pocket of a coat. Like the freeloaders' name-tags, they betray the tourist at a glance, attracting touts and pick-pockets. My solution is to conceal them in a folded local newspaper; but I don't suppose anybody's fooled.

In the old days, the green guides were vulnerable on grounds of language. In English, they rather slavishly followed French phraseology. "At the foot of a semicircle of high, bare white cliffs coils the river. . . ." "The chancel is terminated by a five-sided apse." "The abbey remained idle until it was finally extinguished by the Revolution." There were also misprints: "al" and "harmonjous", for example. Still, these were venial compared to the errors in many official publications, especially from museums and galleries. It puzzles me why those responsible don't engage native English speakers to check translations which often verge on

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the Mediterranean-menu degree of ludicrous obscurity.

Your new, reformed green guides seem to have had such treatment. The Italian volume is exemplary in this respect. Admirers less fervent than I may dispute your star allocations: should Michelangelo's *Brutus* in the Florence Bargello, for example, not have at least one? But your crispness, again, offsets such minor queries. Who else would so aptly describe the Medici Princes' chapel, that monument of massive mediocrity, as "grandiose but gloomy"? Who else could be at once so tactful and so curt about the Victor Emmanuel "wedding-cake"? "This huge memorial . . . overshadows the other monuments of Rome by its sheer size and dazzling white colour." Your readers-between-the-lines will be equally clear about Novara ("a busy commercial and industrial town as well as being an important road junction") or any coastal town introduced as "this seaside resort".

Accompanying you to Italy just before Easter, I equipped myself with your latest red guide, and fared well, with two exceptions. One was a two-spoon-and-fork restaurant in a hill town, with a meagre menu, nursery furniture, and barely civil service; the other, a three-turret ("very comfortable") hotel with charming service but mail-order taste. Otherwise, as usual, your recommendations were superb. The best of them was for a minute, 15-room inn a stone's throw from Orvieto cathedral, in a building which outside looked like a Verdi opera tavern and inside might have been designed by David Hicks.

LAZINESS had stranded me at first, however, with an out-of-date version of your green guide, much-thumbed, dog-eared, and crumbling. Worse than its physical decrepitude was its now inaccurate information about opening times. After bearding several implacable janitors, I began to suspect that at least two new artists should be added to Italy's pantheon—Oggichiuso, the gloomy Master of the Closed Door, and Oggifesta, his more jubilant counterpart, eagerly repelling boarders and half-boarders alike.

But opening hours in Italy are a subject in themselves. When I served in Egypt as a British army officer just after World War II, the climate was deemed too hot for us to work in the afternoons. In summer, we knocked off for good at lunchtime; in winter, we put in two hours in the early evening. And how did we delicate Europeans spend that oppressive time when the sun was almost vertically overhead and the Fahrenheit thermometer read 130° in the shade? Why, of course: we went sailing and sightseeing. It was far too stifling to sit in an office under a cooling fan, but dinghy-racing was no strain at all.

I don't know how Italians would have reacted; but I do remember my surprise, when I first lived in Rome, that my landlord climbed into pyjamas every afternoon to enjoy his siesta. And of course everything closed. The heat was nothing to speak of: but the habit was unshakable. In France, for 20 years or more, *la journée continue* has been replacing the old two-hour lunch break, when working women used to rush home to prepare vast meals for their menfolk. Now, in Paris and elsewhere, people are accustomed to *le quick-lunch* and *le snack*. Fine quick-lunch cafeteria are now opening in some Italian cities; yet with few exceptions, the siesta still rules. It certainly affects the opening hours of many museums—even in Florence, where the tourist season hardly ever abates.

This baffles me. Italy spends 0.2% of its annual budget on its cultural heritage; and everyone agrees that this is far from enough. Although scaffolding, green tarpaulins, and restorers are swarming all over the place, with half the Sistine Chapel's ceiling invisible, the Trevi Fountain drained, and masons' hammers resounding in a score of cathedrals, this is not just to herald the summer invasion: far more work is needed, even simply to clean half the monuments in sight. But funds are limited: and rooms in some museums and galleries are actually closed "for want of staff". At the same time, however, visitors with banknotes in their hands are turned away—not only on Mondays, when most national establishments are shut, but almost everywhere from 2.00 p.m. until the following morning. It seems lunatic, when turnstile receipts could surely be doubled by opening throughout the day. Why not, in fact, copy the London timetable and stay open all day and every day, closing on Sunday morning or Sunday afternoon?

There's another source of puzzlement, too. One reason for the frenzy of work being done, or waiting to be done, on Italy's monuments is pollution by vehicle fumes. The country has some excellent public transport systems, notably the state rail network, which is comprehensive, clean, speedy, and (being heavily subsidised) astonishingly cheap. A useful companion to the red and green guides is a national train timetable. But, Italians being individualists and many of them not long removed from relative poverty, the car is as much a fetish as in any of their neighbour countries, Britain included. Walking is not, repeat not, an Italian pastime, any more than in the United States. Trudging up the steep, beautiful, two-mile hill from Assisi to St Francis's hermitage, I was overtaken and immersed in fumes by innumerable drivers all going to the same place, but missing the essential scale and drama of the pilgrimage by making it far too easy, a matter of automotive wheels instead of human muscle.

That was bad enough. Worse is the way in which cars roar through narrow medieval streets. Their drivers are quick-witted enough to avoid accidents, even to rubber-necking visitors. What they can't avoid is destroying what the visitors come to see. The grime on Italian monuments recalls Glasgow 50 years ago. The Duomo and the Baptistery in Florence are filthy—yet cars and buses are still allowed to pass within feet of them, belching out chemicals as in an old-fashioned steel plant. Looking at photographs taken on my first visit, 41 years ago, all I see are bicycles. There are still some brave souls who use them. But why not ban all cars from the historic centres of these wonderful cities? Make people walk again in the hill towns, as they used to do, and far less would have to be spent on repairing chemical damage.

I know how Italian friends will react to that idea: raised eyebrows, sad smiles, spread hands, and shrugged shoulders. And also, perhaps, resentment. When Britain's latest train crash was reported in the Italian press, one writer pointed out that the British had long made themselves unpopular by scolding their continental colleagues, rather as I've just done—accusing the Italians, for instance, of slackness, unpunctuality, irresponsibility. Perhaps now, the writer went on, the British will learn some humility. Their rail disasters

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seem to have resulted from lack of investment, tardy modernisation, human error. They're not superhuman after all. It was a salutary admonishment. British press editorials, in particular, have long seemed to me far too moralistic and insufficiently analytical. We really must learn not to act as nannies to the world.

AND YET, in the last resort, everyone should surely be allowed to speak their minds. This is my basic view on the Salman Rushdie affair. I don't personally care for Rushdie's writing —which is why I failed to sign the manifesto organised by the "Committee for the Defence of Salman Rushdie". I'd certainly have signed one organised by a "Committee for Free Speech". On this issue there can be no compromise, save as regards libel on living persons: all blasphemy laws, in my view, should be repealed. I don't mind Shia Muslims blackguarding Rushdie, and I can understand why they very much mind his blackguarding Mohammed, if he did. What is utterly objectionable, and should be severely punished if committed within British jurisdiction, is any threat to or attempt on Rushdie's life—or that of anyone else. Here, secular freedom and religious fundamentalism are in absolute contradiction, and we should not equivocate at all.

Happily, many Sunni and other moderate Muslims seem to agree in condemning death threats, however deeply they may resent apparent blasphemy against their faith. What worries me still, however, is the tendency for some of them—and some Western religious leaders—to argue that writers on such subjects should tone down their remarks so as to avoid giving offence. What pitiful, mealy-mouthed nonsense! Did the prophets they worship look over their shoulders to see whether they were upsetting orthodox religionists? Is truth so frail and touchy that it can't stand mockery and insults? Do those likely to be offended have to read the offending work? Above all, is the West going to let itself be intimidated by threats of murder? What sort of people do they think we are?

Reading Italian press reports of apparently trimming statements by the Chief Rabbi and the Vatican's *Osservatore Romano*, I began to see how libertarian firmness can be eroded. One might imagine that in a country as Catholic as Italy, erosion could be rapid. Not so. Newspaper editorials were as steadfast there as anywhere—not least in Milan's *Il Corriere della Sera*, which in Italy remains my first choice.

How do you feel, Bibendum? Would you be prepared, one day, to add newspapers to your invaluable travellers' tips? One, two, or three spoons for scoops, perhaps? Small humble pies for errors? And white feathers for giving in to threats.

M

The Royal Feast

Slowly the fork inquires into the coffee
(Lit by a sombre shaft of light from the hall
Down which the retreating nurse's footsteps fall),
And up to the old man's lip begins its climb,
Held by his unsure hand,
In perfect time
To the Handelian sarabande
Of Haydn's magisterial
"Alleluia" C-major symphony.

His bib slipped on, my wife slices his beets
With tablespoon and knife, while, from my chair
Off to the side, as Haydn sweeps the air,
I watch stiff footmen scrape in periwig,
Brocaded vest and breeches,
With suckling pig,
And port, and culinary riches,
While, nodding at me in shadows there,
Our loved monarch calmly, lucidly eats

His tuna salad with a butter knife.
The tinny radio that set this stage
So well now airs the reined-in, passionate rage
Of Bach's D-minor piano concerto, while tears
My wife controls (that thank
The nurse who clears
Away his tray) and oxygen tank
Behind his shoulder (like a page)
Further define the grandeur of his life.

David Galler

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Graeme Wilson

Early Japanese Poems

On the March

So far we've marched, so many miles
My need for her is numb.

Comrade, do not melt the stony
Coldness I've become
With talk of wife and children,
The warm lost world of home.

Anonymous *(5th or 6th century)*

Need

There is, I think, no single hour
In which I do not find
Myself brief-swept with need for you:
But in the evenings, blind
With love and lust, there is no other
Matter in my mind.

Anonymous *(late 7th century)*

Comfort

"Good luck, lad", they told me:
"Come home safe", they said.

I shall never forget my parents' words
As they placed their hands on my head
And gave me comfort; they who needed
Most to be comforted.

Hasetsukabe no Inamaro
(written in 755)

Spring

Spring. The garden. Peach-trees
Fabulously red.
A path between them where a girl,
As through a flower-bed,
Wades in the lane's reflection
Of the flowers overhead.

Otomo no Yakamochi (*718-85*)

Passion

Odd, that I used to think them,
These summer bugs which fly
Straight to their own bare-flame destruction,
Foolish. Foolish? Why,
When no man runs to his passion-pyre
More avidly than I?

Oshikochi no Mitsune (*859-907*)

Summer Night

Before the night has seemed a night,
Before the moon has found
One cloud-crevasse through which to pour
Its silver on the ground,
Summer's dawn breaks back again
And we are daylight-drowned.

Kiyowara no Fukayabu (*9th century*)

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Marker Buoy

Sogged with tears of thwarted longing,
My bed has come to be
A wetland of self-pity,
A marsh, a lake, a sea
And I no more than a wreck-buoy marking
What became of me.

Fujiwara no Okikaze (*fl. c.910*)

The Sound of Silence

Late, late at night
I was slumber-bound
When, huge and shining,
White and round,
From cloven cloud the moon exploded
Loud with its soundlessness of sound.

Priest Ryosen (*c.992-c.1060*)

Winter Sub-Song

In glens below Mimoro Mountain
Spring has begun.

Already under winter-snows
Unnoticed waters run
To tap from hidden rocks their tiny
Sub-song to the sun.

Minamoto no Kunizane
(*1069-1111*)

At Ofu Bay

The inbound waves at Ofu Bay
Delight me as they bear
Whitecap blossoms up the beach
To be transfigured there
Into themselves and burst uphill
As flowers of mountain-pear.

Minamoto no Toshiyori
(*c.1057-1129*)

Winter

I had thought to be sad
When the maples shed
Their scarlet leaves.

I am instead
Moon-blessed between bare boughs that once
Were a mere blind red.

Prince Tomohira (*alive in 979*)

Summer Moon

Tonight the moon is unseasonably bright.
To be more precise,
So brilliant is its steady blaze
That one has to look twice
To be reassured that the shining pond
Is not some sheet of ice.

Priest Saigyo (*1118-90*)

Cherry Petal

I renounced the world; but this passion for flowers
Still burns in my breast.

Since any single worldly thing,
Even its tiniest,
Implies the existence of everything else,
I am world-possessed.

Priest Saigyo (*1118-90*)

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NOTES & TOPICS

Triumphalism in the Crucible of Tragic Politics

On Bertrand de Jouvenel—By IRVING LOUIS HOROWITZ

CERTAIN BOOKS can too readily be overlooked by professionals. *The Nature of Politics*[1] has all the limitations of the genre: it is a collection of papers and not a unified work. It is released by a now-defunct publisher, or, rather, one absorbed by a larger house (Schocken has been taken over by Pantheon, which in turn is a wholly owned subsidiary of Random House). Finally, as the editors make plain, this is the work of a figure with few disciples, writing in a tradition outside the main driving forces of Anglo-American and Germanic political cultures.

These obligatory caveats raised, one must offer appreciation to the editors of this volume, who along with Wilson McWilliams have built a useful framework for understanding the sadly neglected, badly maligned figure of Bertrand de Jouvenel. Indeed, Dennis Hale and Marc Landy provide a model opening essay—rarely seen these days. Their statement on de Jouvenel is literate and articulate, offering an appreciation of his work, from newspaperman to political theorist, in the firm historical context of his times and places. While Roy Pierce, Evelyn Pisier, and Carl Slavin in particular have written useful essays on de Jouvenel, this introduction could serve as a useful jumping-off point for a full-scale consideration of de Jouvenel in the context of 20th-century French politics.

Bertrand de Jouvenel offers intriguing cross-over points between liberal and conservative thought, nationalist and cosmopolitan sentiment, and rightist and leftist political action. In this sense, he reflects the main tendencies of French life and thought between the two World Wars (read: European wars) and the major movements in French thought after World War II. His intellectual progress reveals a variety of drifts that reflect personal loyalties even more than political sensibilities.

He is, for example, tied to Jacques Doriot's *Parti Populaire Français,* even as that sinister figure drifts from strong linkages to communism and socialism to new ties with fascism and Nazism. He interviews Adolf Hitler in 1936, and reports back with assurances of a policy of political friendship to France—one week prior to the Nazi occupation of the Rhineland. De Jouvenel's opposition to this move and his urging of Anglo-French action to curb Hitler notwithstanding, the interview had a disorientating and demobilising impact. The editors claim that, although reading this interview today is an "unnerving experience", de Jouvenel was simply "lied to about German intentions". But, of course, the puzzlement remains as to how so sophisticated a figure as de Jouvenel could simply accept Hitler at face value and transmit such lies as *bona fide*.

That de Jouvenel was a patriot of France and that his mistakes were never made in the spirit of fascist closure are confirmed by the magnificent statement of Raymond Aron, quoted in a moving tribute to that great political philosopher by Edward Shils, which appeared in a volume of essays entitled *History, Truth, Liberty* (1989). Since it is not included in *The Nature of Politics,* I take the liberty of citing it in some detail. It may help to dispel the myth of de Jouvenel's anti-Semitism and neo-fascism.

Edward Shils once asked Aron his opinion of de Jouvenel's conduct during the early years of the German occupation. Aron's answer, repeated and embellished upon in a courtroom context at the very end of his life, went as follows:

> "The idea of the French army and the subjugation of France by Germany had deeply shaken and disordered the spirits of those who had to live under it. It was easy for me because I had to leave France, being a Jew, and so I could maintain my intellectual equilibrium. But for those who remained behind, the situation was very much harder. Furthermore, well before the Germans were driven out of France, Jouvenel had made amends by serving the *résistance*."

Aron is careful to distinguish political treason from flawed intellectual judgment—no small matter in assessing someone like de Jouvenel.

Biographical information aside, the post-War de Jouvenel who set himself the task of understanding the fundamental laws and theorems of political science remains worthy of study. Indeed, as in the case of Carl Schmitt (a much clearer and more painful case of collaboration with Nazism), one has to appreciate the limits of biography and examine the

[1] *The Nature of Politics: Selected Essays of Bertrand de Jouvenel.* Edited with an introduction by DENNIS HALE and MARC LANDY. Foreword by WILSON CAREY MCWILLIAMS. Schocken Books, £15.95.

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contribution of someone like de Jouvenel for his theoretical merits. The dividing lines between personal virtue and intellectual skills are at best unclear. In the case of de Jouvenel, it is useful to take the extraordinary paradigms he has bequeathed us in the study of politics, and perhaps ignore (I did not say forget) any personal or political indiscretions.

To be sure, it might have been best if Hale and Landy had come to terms with their master on his own intellectual ground, rather than seeking purification of his behaviour as a precondition of textual analysis. We all want our intellectual heroes to be men and women of personal probity. Alas, this is not always the case, and in fact is rarely so. Coming to terms with this stubborn fact involves our own sense of maturation and entails the recognition that people are not always made of whole cloth. Thus, while de Jouvenel may not be a paragon of virtue, he may still be a source of useful theory.

THE PAPERS in this volume are nearly all from de Jouvenel's writings in the English language. And this is a shame, since there are papers in French that deserve to be translated and that might shed light precisely on the theme of the inside outsider—the French nationalist and French *philosophe* writing from a perspective beyond that of English constitutional tradition or German organic jurisprudence. In his tradition, figures such as Tocqueville, Sorel, Thierry, and Rousseau loom very large indeed. Still, the essays reprinted here are valuable, for de Jouvenel is interested in politics in the context of political science and how a science of politics is possible, much less potentially significant.

Each social science faced a crisis in confidence after the end of World War II, a struggle with the earlier assumption that everyone knew what the major social-service taxonomies represented, and in consequence what a political science meant. The essays "The Nature of Politics", "On The Nature of Political Science", and "Political Science and Prevision" offer a prolegomena to the science of politics that should be required reading for all who dare think of the field as a discipline. Why the editors did not group them together is something I frankly cannot understand. Surely, intellectual configuration should deservedly have preempted sheer chronology—especially in treating such a protean figure.

Bertrand de Jouvenel started with a small group concept of the political and an acknowledged indebtedness to the great sociologist George Homans: "It is a technique for the addition of human energies by the union of wills." When this union of wills becomes a collective assemblage and forms a purposive form of action, we move from technique to action: "The characteristic activity of pure politics may, therefore, be defined as an activity that builds, consolidates and keeps in being aggregates of men." De Jouvenel goes on to say that "with this definition, I have shot my bolt". The expressive American colloquialism notwithstanding, nothing could be further from the truth. For de Jouvenel moves from action to conception, to the ideas that will make durable, binding, and consensual the aggregates of people.

When he examines the nature of political science, his work takes on the imperial vision so typical of the master-builder in search of the social scientists. It turns out that nearly all forms of social organisation are subsumed under the label "political": "Politics consists of nothing other than human behaviour."

Having finished off the domain of sociology, he moves to do the same for psychology:

> "I hold the view that we should regard as political every systematic effort performed at any place in the social field to move other men in pursuit of some design cherished by the mover."

The psychic deviant may become the political leader.

De Jouvenel next moves along to coopt economics, a discipline which we are assured is not to be feared. Politics becomes a way to study the moral passion regarding economic behaviour. In all fairness to de Jouvenel, he recognises the imperfect fusion of the economic and the political. Beyond that, he can be sharply critical of the organicism of Hegelian political theory, of the notion of a "healthy political body", which for him leads to decadence, to a pseudo-restorationism of a German Holy Roman Empire that moves away from factualism to fanaticism in the study of politics.

IN THE THIRD paper on this important subject, de Jouvenel informs us that it is better to speak of political behaviour and institutions than of an organic body politic. In this way one can deal modestly and sensibly with political institutions as instrumental in value and character, not as transcendental entities that need mindless support (Here, one senses a settling of accounts with totalitarianisms of all sorts.) For this reason, de Jouvenel advocated the English-language tradition of distinguishing between politics and policies; the French language tends to blunt this distinction, this separation between the association of groups for common ends and the constant redefinition of those ends for the common good.

Hale and Landy tend to seek in de Jouvenel someone neither Left nor Right, neither liberal nor conservative. While this might be the case, it is also true that de Jouvenel was a fish out of specifically French water. He developed strong proclivities in favour of democracy—a democracy of fairness,

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freedom, and the civility that links the political process with the calling of political science. Carey McWilliams in his brief foreword gets close to the marrow of this sub-structure in de Jouvenel's work.

Several other powerful and prescient papers are included in this collection. While they do not replace de Jouvenel's larger works (many of which are readily available in English), they enhance the fusion that he sought to create between the political and the political-scientific. The papers on authority, on forms of government, and on means of opposition (again, sadly separated in this volume in favour of a mechanical timetable of original publication) form a shrewd social-psychological approach to building a theory of state power. They serve as a constant reminder that the achievement of sound policies derives not from the suppression of extreme thoughts but from the elucidation and elaboration of those "near-to-median opinions" that permit democratic societies, politics, and polities to survive and thrive. This is the burden of his final paper, on "the team against the committee"; namely, the fostering of opposing views as a mechanism of governance and legitimacy.

It was de Jouvenel's sad fate to be out of synchronisation with his environment during nearly every phase of his life. When he was a democrat he was surrounded by an aristocratic milieu; when he became an advocate of socialism, he found the extremes corroding the centre, the democracy he believed in. When he held out hope for a pacific resolution of European affairs, fanaticism broke out throughout Europe; when he advocated resistance, the régime accepted capitulation. Finally, in a post-War France in which cultural heroes turned increasingly to irrational models in the name of existential and total solutions, he returned to a strong commitment to civil culture and a liberal society.

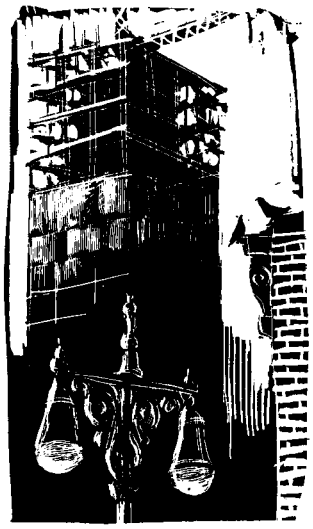
De Jouvenel changed less than the extremities of the societies in which he lived, although, in part at least, he suffered for being out of phase with 20th-century France. This collection of his essays helps to redress the bad hand dealt to him by his contemporaries. But, while we admit the neglect of someone who provided a commonsense vision of political culture, the problem remains: why was this individual, placed by the editors of this collection in the divine pantheon of "great political thinkers of the 20th-century", so thoroughly neglected? That issue does deserve at least cursory address—by the reviewer, if not by his editors.

De Jouvenel's triumph in political philosophy was to ask the original question. His tragedy in political practice was failure to ask how such questions were played out in the realm of real authority. In consequence, as a guide through quotidian events he proved less than useless. We are therefore left with the same question in theory as in biography: whether any relationship or connection exists between the thinker and the doer. But to answer "No", to rest content with a bifurcated consciousness, does more to weaken de Jouvenel's place in the panorama of contemporary intellectual history than do formal debates on his theoretical attitudes to the Principate or his practical attitudes to Napoleon, Hitler, or Stalin. The moral rub is that the new linguistic wine for old totalitarian régimes was selected by de Jouvenel because the term "Principate" was simply "neutral, equally acceptable to those who approve of such régimes and to those who disapprove of them".

This surely stretches the limit of objectivity in political theory and political practice alike. Along the way, such prudence without purpose toppled de Jouvenel from any place among the pantheon of the great thinkers of his age.

In Search of the Inner City

By Roy Kerridge



Everybody in England agrees that something must be done about the Inner City. But nobody is quite sure what the Inner City *is*. The term comes from America, with no translation provided. American cities, complete with "uptown", "downtown", and "shopping mall", are baffling places for an Englishman to understand. None of these American terms are useful in describing any part of an English city.

Logically, "Inner City" ought to mean the City Centre. In practice, the term as used in England can mean either a concrete high-rise nightmare that began as a Dream of Progress, or the "coloured quarter". If "Inner City" means "concrete nightmare", then I have seen with my own eyes a City Centre become an Inner City. Seventeen years ago, in 1972, I spent a day in Bradford, appalled by the sight of the glorious aldermanic mercantile buildings being pulled down to make way for concrete blocks.

The Victorian city fathers—may they rest in peace—created an "Inner City" of gigantic temples of commerce and a town hall that rivals St Pancras Station. These stately grey towers were interrupted by little gaps, alleys, and steep stone stairways that ducked or elbowed their way between or beneath the touching monuments to forgotten pride. Half-remembered stories by Dickens or Robert Louis Stevenson hovered in the back of my mind as I hurried in and out of entries and archways. Some of the Gothic stores and counting-houses seemed almost blasphemous in their imitation of churches and cathedrals. Yet it was a lesser blasphemy than

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the consecration of modern monstrosities as *actual* churches and cathedrals, as was done at Coventry. Bradford's cathedral follows the pattern of many old parish churches that have been recently cathedralised, in that one end appears to have been sawn off and a modern extension stuck on.

To my horror, I saw a once-magnificent railway station being torn down to make way for a new shopping precinct whose box-like cinema had already been completed. The film *Clockwork Orange* was advertised in huge garish letters. Councillors are fond of "precincts", as all rents are paid to the council. I was so upset at the scenes of destruction I beheld, that I stayed out of Bradford until a few months ago. When I returned, all was concrete except the bewildered Town Hall, and citizens proudly boasted that the new bus station was "the largest in Europe".

IT WAS A RELIEF, therefore, to move from one kind of Inner City to another, for Bradford's "coloured quarter" at Manningham proved to be a delightful neighbourhood of houses made from honey-coloured stone. I was reminded of Cotswold towns, such as Burford, that were founded on an earlier wool trade. I put down my plastic bag in Mrs Chowdhury's Guest House and set out to explore. Nearly everybody I saw appeared to come from Pakistan or Kashmir.

Near Manningham Library, I found a steep, cobbled street filled with fervent young men. A black coffin, inscribed with Eastern symbols in gold, was being lifted on to a hearse. A hush fell, as an imposing Imam in a white beard and a black hat carried himself with erect dignity down the steps of a tall, grim building, the Islamic Educational Institute. I slipped past, noticing that only one woman could be seen, standing on the very corner of the road.

Elsewhere I encountered little girls with lace hoods draped over their heads and shoulders. A boy in flowing pale blue robes ran into one doorway, and a gaggle of excited bearded men in bright orange fezzes emerged from another. Across the road, the unmistakable shape of a domed mosque emerged from the scaffolding of a building site. Just as the Muslim school was an Institute, the future mosque was advertised as a Muslim Community Centre.

PAKISTANI BRADFORD proved to be an area of delightful stone houses and cottages with gardens. Lister's Mill (still in use) stretches grandly along a hill top, its huge entrance bays facing neat terraced houses. A vista of green hills greeted me at the end of one road, a blue reservoir at another. In a half-timbered coffee house on a corner, covered in Oriental pictures, Indians and smart young Yorkshiremen joked and chatted amiably. Ordering mangos and cream, I forgot about the Inner City for a time, and concentrated on the Inner Man.

As school "going home time" approached, the streets filled with women in saris setting off in procession to collect their offspring. One middle-aged father wore robes, boots, and a skull-cap; he had a bright, orange-dyed beard. Seeing this wondrous procession, or pageant of national costumes, I felt something of the Romance of the Road from Kipling's *Kim*.

Now the streets filled with children, all playing in front of their houses.

"Come and see our mosque!" a boy summoned me, and I stepped gingerly around a blue carpet laid diagonally across the floor of a bleak former church hall.

"Don't tread on the carpet!" warned one of the group of ten-year-old boys. I admired a fringed mat covered in red patterns.

"That's the mat used by the man who shouts", one of the boys explained.

"You should become a Muslim, it's a very good religion", a fifteen-year-old urged me, his eyes shining. "Muslims have more fun than Christians—everyone knows that. You don't *have* to have arranged marriages, that's only for girls. My sister had an arranged marriage last month."

Up and down the side-streets and cobbled alleyways, young Bradford was at play. The Yorkshire mill town life of the '30s had been recreated by children of the mosque. As they chased each other merrily around the steps and pavements, they chatted in a mixture of English and Urdu. Mothers appeared smiling in doorways or calling down the street for Nasir or Habib to come indoors. Some slight changes had been made to the 1930s picture. Washing-lines were in front gardens, instead of round the back. Little girls played cricket in the road, while small boys skipped solemnly with long ropes.

Carpets seemed a great issue here. Mats were unrolled on the pavements and hosed down by whole families, the mother supervising. Some impish children, barefoot on steep steps, called me over and tried to sell me the strips of stair carpet they had been playing with. One road ended in a stone wall, with steps leading down through a narrow gap to a sunken cobbled alley facing a row of tiny back yards. A huge carpet, dripping with soap-suds, lay across the wall and descended into the alley, held up with wooden props as it dried.

Sauntering from alley to alley, I admired street after street of children at play, the presence of responsible adults never far away. Surely some of these children will grow up to write nostalgic books entitled *Down Our Street, A Yorkshire Childhood,* or *Growing Up in the 'Eighties.*

Next day I called at Drummond Middle School, once the scene of "RACIST OUT!" agitation against the former headmaster, Ray Honeyford. Denied access to the school, I made the mistake of visiting the Drummond Language Centre, a separate establishment within the school walls. Here Urdu-speaking children were taught a smattering of English before joining the main school next door. A gaunt, bearded teacher refused to believe I was a writer. He humoured me for a few minutes, and then called the police.

At the school gateway, I was apprehended by PC Sansom and borne away in a police car to Toller Lane cop shop. After some interrogation, a phone call to *The Spectator* secured my release. Stern but fair, PC Sansom seemed to believe that I was a lunatic who thought he was a writer. Perhaps he was right. I cut short my stay at Mrs Chowdhury's, and left Bradford for a while.

Last week I returned, and found the lively streets as enchanting as ever. A large group of hooded women stood at one gateway, singing and chanting around one of their number who was soon to be married. One of them waved

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a large cat-o'-nine-tassels over the future bride's head, as if driving away evil influences. The tassels, or tails, were a Christmassy scarlet-and-yellow. Young men stood on the gateposts and photographed the scene, and children ran in and out of the open door as if a party were being held within.

Leather-jacketed, quiff-haired teenage boys lounged in a pool of light beneath a lamp post as dusk grew on. They seemed dismissive of the celebration, and their whole attitude to Bradford life seemed an uneasy mixture of shame and pride. On their shoulders rested the task of building up an English Muslim way of life, and they weren't sure they were equal to it. All the older youngsters of the Bradford streets affected a "tough" air—sometimes that of responsible men, sometimes that of American hoodlums. Girls in their teens stayed indoors and helped their mothers. The strong protective family background of the lamp post boys prevented them from doing any wrong. But they could still dream . . . .

"Have you been to a part of London called Soho?" one of the tough boys asked me. "I really would like to go to Soho and see the naughty ladies. Our bad girls here in Lumb Lane are no good. In Soho, the girls are beautiful and tested against all diseases."

He sighed deeply, and I left him to his illusions. I had an appointment with Mr and Mrs Khan. They lived near Honeyford's old school, where their son was a pupil. Soon I was sitting in the cosy Khan kitchen, talking to the children and watching Mrs K. preparing the chapattis. A stout, smiling woman in pink traditional dress, Mrs Khan rolled scone-like dough into pancake shapes, then gave each one three ritual slaps before throwing it on to a long-handled chapatti-pan, half frying-pan and half baker's shovel. Held over a gas-ring, the chapattis began to swell like yeast, ballooning up into delicious feather-light morsels, ready to be folded between finger and thumb and dipped in meat sauce.

A pale seventeen-year-old girl, the Khans' daughter Ghazala, drifted into the room, her veil-like shawl floating behind her hair. Demure and softly spoken, she had her mother's large expressive eyes. Normally she helped around the house, but that day she had been on a coach trip to Blackpool. There was no "purdah" here, and Mr Khan greeted me with pleasure when he returned from work. A tall, grizzle-bearded, crinkle-faced man, he resembled an Afghan warrior mellowed in retirement, but actually he worked as a tailor's cutter.

After our meal we moved into the front room, a gaudy fairyland of scarlet, gold, and orange. Strings of wedding invitation cards hung above cut-glass vases and other ornaments, some very elaborate. A miniature fountain sprayed water up and around in a perpetual circle, watched by china figures of bears and tigers. No ban on representational art existed here, for framed photographs of mosques hung side by side with a large painting of the Prophet on horseback, pursued by a hail of arrows.

"His enemies tried to kill him!" one of the many young cousins who ran in and out of the house paused to tell me.

Most of the decorations, apart from bright ruffs and cushions scattered around the furniture, were framed texts from the Koran, exquisitely painted and decorated with silver-paper mosaic. Young Khans told me of animals from the "homeland" they have never seen—cobras, elephants, and cheetahs or hunting-leopards, used by rajahs to catch gazelles.

Later that night I met a group of boys dancing excitedly around two black puppies which had been thrown from a passing car. An older boy, who said he wanted to be a policeman, helped to organise a chain of excitable children who carried the wriggling pups in turn to Toller Lane police station, high on a hill.

"I know the way in. I've been here before", I told the boys. A world-weary sergeant locked the pups in a shed and gave them some water.

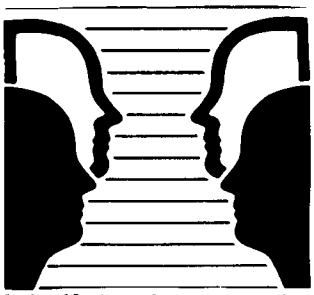
"Our Dads won't let us keep them, as dogs are unclean", a boy explained sadly.

I bade my new friends farewell, sorry to leave Bradford. In London, artists, teachers and musicians find Brixton, Notting Hill and Stoke Newington delightful places in which to live. The same rule applies in Bradford. Bearded young Englishmen on bikes smiled and waved at the merry crowds of children who played around their doors. Modern architecture drives people away, but Inner Cities that are "coloured quarters" swiftly become highly desirable neighbourhoods. Come to the Inner City!

Paris Notebook

By Jean-François Revel

Immigration: Telling It the Way It Is



LIKE NEARLY ALL our major national quarrels, the French row about immigration is characterised by a great deal of talk on the basis of very little knowledge. Do we even know, for example, the precise number of aliens residing in France? Ought immigration to be halted? Are there more departures—forced or voluntary—today than formerly? Has France been untrue to her mission as an international place of refuge, a *"terre d'asile"*? How many aliens adopt French nationality each year? Does the incidence of delinquency among aliens exceed the national average? Why do immigrant children, even those who are born French, do so very badly at school? Is our French experience of immigration from other continents different from that of the rest of Western Europe?

These are all questions which are discussed vehemently and often in complete ignorance of the facts. Recently a prominent *homme d'Etat* of impeccably liberal credentials was heard to declare: "Immigration must be stopped!" But immigration was stopped in 1974, when the Government decided to ban any more permanent foreign workers from entering

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France. The only authorised fresh entries since then have been people rejoining their families or petitioners being granted political asylum. The total percentage increase in the alien population, which stood at 4.5% per annum in the period 1968-74, fell to 1% in 1975-82 and 0.7% in 1982-5.

Someone could object, no doubt, that these statistics fail to take account of illegal immigration. But the statistics present a chaotic enough picture even without illegal immigration. In 1982 our National Institute of Statistics & Economic Studies (INSEE) counted 3,680,100 aliens and the Ministry of the Interior 4,223,928. (What happened was that INSEE based its figure on the findings of the 1982 census—as if all those forms had been filled in and returned with the same enthusiasm in immigrant circles as among the rest of the population.) As for the recipients of political asylum, there were 1,600 in 1974 and 30,000 in 1986. It is difficult, in the light of these figures, not to laugh at idiotic accusations to the effect that France has "closed its borders".

For these details and many others we have to thank Jacques Voisard and Christiane Ducastelle, whose clear, cool, concise account of "the immigrant question in present-day France" provides us with a valuable information tool-kit written in a spirit of complete neutrality.[1]

NOT THAT THERE IS anything exceptional about immigration in France. With an alien population of 7%, we are close to the European average. But several additional factors exacerbate the tensions, notably over-concentration in certain *départements* and above all in urban areas. Apparently 70% of aliens live in towns of more than 100,000 inhabitants as against only 40% of French people. Hence the fourfold outcome of overcrowding, increased unemployment, inadequate education leading to actual failure, and a high incidence of delinquency. Hence, too, this key idea: the immigrant problem in France is in the first place simply "the handicaps of poverty in general", writ large. These are then compounded by certain specific handicaps that differ in accordance with the immigrant's country of origin. The real dividing-line, in other words, is not primarily between residents with French nationality and those without. Between naturalisations (60,000) and births (40,000), there are 100,000 new French citizens a year. But that is not to say that they will not continue to live in the immigrant milieu with all its economic, socio-cultural, and psychological disadvantages. The "existential" immigrant may well not be an alien, and many aliens who are permanent or long-term residents by no means share the immigrant way of life.

The immigrant question needs to be first "deracialised" and then "socialised". It needs to be taken away from the speechifiers of every political persuasion and placed at last where it belongs: at the level of a human economic and cultural reality like any other.

Let me give you two examples. The high incidence of delinquency among immigrants is a fact. What I propose to show is that it is the person who categorically denies that fact who is actually "the racist". It is precisely because he implicitly accepts that this high incidence may be due to race or ethnic background that our man prefers to deny it, fearing that it will exacerbate xenophobia. On the other hand, the man to whom it would never occur to think that the higher incidence of delinquency among immigrants might be due to race feels no need to blind himself to the actual reasons for it. He knows that it stems from living conditions: excessive concentration in towns and cities; overcrowding in substandard housing; above-average levels of educational failure and unemployment; and below-average incomes. They are the same conditions that push the more deprived sections of the native French population into delinquency. However, the proportion of the French population living in such bad conditions is lower than among aliens. So to refuse to acknowledge the high incidence of alien delinquency is *not* to adopt an anti-racial stance. Quite the opposite, in fact. Such a stance leads to disastrous consequences because it paralyses any action undertaken to remove the real—social—causes of that delinquency. Why should anyone study the causes of a phenomenon we are assured does not exist?

Similarly, the idea of remedying the educational problem by organising special schooling adapted to the needs of immigrant children, including the first generation born in France, is denounced as "racist" because it would mean organising segregated education. Yet that very taboo itself reflects a subconscious racism. The person who would never dream of putting educational failure down to ethnic factors is not going to be self-conscious about tackling the true causes of such failure, which are socio-cultural. For him, a type of schooling designed (on a provisional basis) in such a way as to bring rapidly up to the level of the other pupils a category that is handicapped by its background—a type of schooling, in other words, that will meet the specific needs of that category—arises out of purely technical imperatives. *Le véritable raciste, c'est l'autre.*

Voisard and Ducastelle write:

> "Having regard to educational failure, level of unemployment, and lack of professional qualifications, it can be estimated that between 300,000 and 500,000 young people, French or otherwise, aged between 15 and 35 are headed for total exclusion."

It will be small consolation to them to know that, when they were eight years old, the pretext that certain high-minded people, *de belles âmes*, gave for pushing them into classes in which they were incapable of keeping pace was the "rejection of exclusion".

Don't get me wrong: the objective—an absolute imperative—is that all children educated in France should sit side by side, receiving the same instruction in the same schools. But between the ages of six and nine educational system adapted to the needs of children with linguistic handicaps—because French is not their parents' mother tongue—is not discrimination: it is the way to abolish it. It would be a case of today's segregation being tomorrow's integration, just as today's integration looks like becoming tomorrow's segregation.

[1] La question immigrée dans la France d'aujourd'hui. By JACQUES VOISARD and CHRISTIANE DUCASTELLE. Fondation Saint-Simon-Calmann-Lévy.

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Voisard and Ducastelle are certainly in favour, as every liberal democrat must be, of "regularising the situation of the alien child within the educational system" and avoiding "any discriminatory solution". One approves whole-heartedly. The fact is, however, that in the present situation, to take the example of the Lyons region, 70% of young immigrants between the ages of 16 and 25 have no job and no qualifications. The children of immigrants emerging from the French educational system with nothing to show for it are even more numerous than the French children. Can any abstract morality justify that kind of massacre?

WHILE THE PERCENTAGE of aliens in France is much the same as it was before the War, immigration from North Africa has become predominant, replacing immigration from elsewhere in Europe. The Portuguese influx, the last significant wave originating from another European country, is now ebbing. Islam is not only the second religion practised in France; it is the second religion among Frenchmen, coming before the Jewish religion and Protestantism. France's political parties have failed to come up with a coherent policy for dealing with an altered situation.

What is worse, the same blindness is afflicting the whole of Europe. African, Middle Eastern, or Asian immigration affects every European country—including, now, the countries of southern Europe that *used* to be the source of the problem. Today it is in Rome that you will hear overtly racist remarks directed at North Africans and blacks. Yet, as the authors of this study deplore, no European body is charged with tracing the evolution of "foreigners in Europe" within the territory of the Community. With the imbalance in demographic growth between the southern and northern shores of the Mediterranean threatening to increase migratory pressures, the Single European Act for 1992 makes no mention of the immigrant question.

The mind boggles at such irresponsibility. Let no one be surprised if, at some time in the future, we have to pay for having turned a blind eye, and find ourselves facing further unforeseen but by no means unforeseeable problems.

Gaps

(for Norman Cameron)

Africa, three wives, a breakdown,
"those notorious gaps of non-being",
a heart-attack, World War Two,
psychoanalysis "by a fellow-Scot",
a Catholic conversion—
he'd been through all that

by the time he sat me on his knee
and did *minnie-min-min*:
the spick shoes and turn-ups
at the end of my giggling drop
are all I remember of his visit,
and the clammy hands.

Adman, he didn't advertise himself,
and brought nothing back from gap-land
except "Normal Norman" who solved at bars
the riddles of the universe
and dissolved the answers in hock,

who took *the voyage to secrecy*
but stays in the eye's corner.
Anguish writhes in his allegories of lust,
of how love turns: poems neat
as the trouser-creases I slid down.

I didn't know that sweaty palms
meant booze, or fear, or the big gap
he saw coming—or all three.

Gareth Reeves

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Mishima & the Green Snake

Archaism vs. "the Economic Miracle"—By I. S. GILLESPIE

WHEN THE JAPANESE novelist Yukio Mishima committed hara-kiri in 1970 at the age of 45, those who knew him as a thoroughly Westernised writer were startled to find how limited their knowledge must have been. Even among his compatriots, his action aroused such perplexity that his English biographer, Henry Scott Stokes, was able to devote an entire chapter to their contradictory theories—ranging from exhibitionism, insanity and patriotism to a (homosexual) suicide-pact. Less attention was given to a traditional religious motivation, although that is precisely what Mishima himself offered in his autobiographical masterpiece, *The Sea of Fertility*. This four-volume novel, despite extending the hero's life into both past and future, also provided him with two selves, one developing realistically as an accidentalised professional while the other reincarnated in four manifestations of Japanese spiritual disintegration. Since the author chose to die at what had been a half-way point in the "spiritual" narrative, presumably this is where one should look for his personal explanation .

It is not uncommon for violent cultural change to trigger a search for lost identity in *temps perdus*, whether in the half-remembered circumstances of childhood, or in an imaginary golden age: "primitive communism", "matriarchy", or fundamentalism. In Mishima's case, Japanese cultural débâcle may appear as recent as 1945, but is more correctly associated with the Western-contrived "enlightened" restoration of the previous century. Its singularity is best envisaged in contrast with its geographical mirror-image, the British Isles, which at a far earlier period suffered repeated erasings of indigenous art, religion, and language.

The Japan "discovered" by Commodore Perry was a museum of religious syncretism, in which primitive animism hobnobbed with Shintoist Emperor-worship, Confucian philosophy, and a somewhat surrealist Buddhism. Such unique conservation of cultural roots seems paradoxical in the light of Japan's ability to absorb foreign skills, which to Westerners has appeared little more than plagiarism. Japanese literature was thought to have blossomed only in contact with the West, regardless of Arthur Waley's translations of the world-class literary genius of 10th-century Kyoto. Only Mishima (by no means the greatest artist among his contemporaries) drew international attention while largely forfeiting esteem, by bitter clowning and self-publicising, body building, boys' brigades, and Nazi-style uniform; above all by the bathos of his death, whereby traditional ritual appeared to be reduced to kitsch, as if patriotism were indistinguishable from self-disgust.

This aspect of the Mishima image has been reinforced in the West by the portrait of the artist as a naked warrior on the covers of his paper-backs. On closer inspection, it is clear that no amount of martial grimacing can fit the woebegone features of the urban intellectual to his athletic torso; it is as if the author's head were thrust through a cardboard frame. None the less, the ill-fated torso symbolises three of Mishima's four aspects, which he called "the rivers of writing, theatre, body, and action". Theatre, particularly his curiously threadbare modernisations of traditional *Noh* drama, accounted for his highest Japanese acclaim. But writing, though it failed to win his expected Nobel Prize (supplying another possible explanation for his suicide) is the achievement for which he will be remembered.

KIMITAKE HIROAKA, later to becone Yukio Mishima, was born in 1925, the eldest son of a Tokyo lawyer of former Samurai status. Despite its glamorous image it was perhaps the most impoverished knightly caste in history. Most Samurai were by then in the despised professions, commerce or petty industry, their treasured swords frequently replaced by ignominious wooden replicas by the time of their banning under Meiji edict in 1869. Another consequence of Meiji "enlightenment" was that boys of Mishima's income-group were subjected to a blueprint of English public-school education. The schoolboy Mishima acquired a Western-facing persona which he revealed in a first autobiographical novel, *Confessions of a Mask,* in the familiar genre of the poetic misfit who finds his identity in homoerotic romance. Predictably, many English critics find this charming pastiche Mishima's most successful work. Robbed of cultural continuity both by education and by unexpected civilian status, Mishima seems to have groped blindly for identity first in the homosexual shadow-side of the Western victor (to which he devoted a lengthy novel, *Forbidden Colours*), then, with a dramatic plunge, in his own nation's past—reorganised

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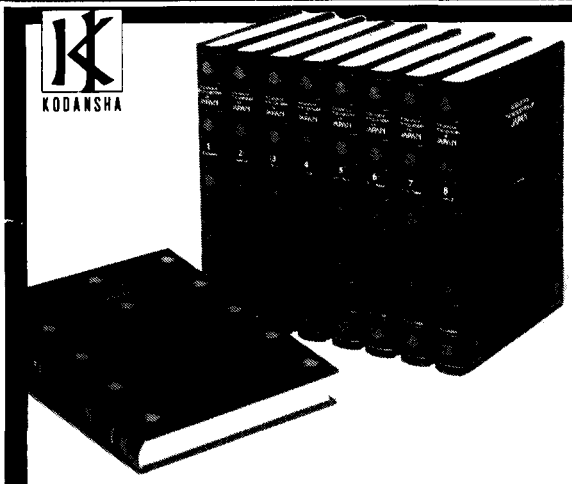

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for presentation to Western audiences but with a remoteness, a deadening of emotional response.

Of 1945, when his country underwent total collapse, Mishima wrote: "I was happy in my daily life and in my writing. . . . I felt no slightest responsibility for myself. I was in anti-gravity environment." In this retreat from contemporary shock, the young man was by no means unique, as Occupying forces frequently reported. Nothing could be more respectable than this unemotional response. After all, his was the nation where the death of a warrior was expected to be received with the feelings evoked by the yearly dispersion of cherry-blossom by the wind, and where self-discipline might be exemplified by a decision "to live as if already dead".

It was similarly correct to apply a cool aesthetic eye to the military mystique of Shinto, for there is nothing specifically Japanese in a glamorous image of war. What is unusual is the flowery or vegetative associations within a martial cult—a principle closer to primeval feminine rituals of sacrificial offering than to combat. It was with such mythic attitudes in mind that Carl Jung coined the clinical usage of the term "archaism" for "psychological traits which essentially correspond with the qualities of primitive mentality". This primitivity would appear to have been second nature to Mishima when, writing of the Tripartite Pact, he proclaimed: "It was a pact joining German, Roman, and Japanese mythology: a friendship among the beautiful, masculine, pagan gods of East and West."

While quite capable of pulling our legs, Mishima was here expressing an aspect of Shintoist dogma still held within this century—for examples "that the national experience of the Japanese people and the will of the gods are one and identical and that the Japanese race was placed on earth as the realisation of the life of the gods and is possessed of their divine attributes". When sentiments resembling these are found in European literature such as Alfred Rosenberg's *Myth of the Twentieth Century*, their psychopathic nature is seldom questioned. However, Hitler's mythologist was engaged in reviving a mentality which had been defunct for a millennium. Modern exponents of Shinto are simply quoting their fathers. Celebrations of the Shintoist deities are holidays coexisting with more sophisticated observances, much as if church attendance among pious Westerners included an occasional cheerful sacrifice to Wotan, Isis, or Apollo. Mishima's patriotism was anachronistic only by a generation.

Where he is more truly "archaic" is in his revival of earlier elements of animism, interwoven with feudal "heroism" oddly juxtaposed with modern realism. Japanese animism is typified by the *kami*—spiritual essences not quite evolved into gods, and at a later stage humanised to fit bardic praise-song. In Japan as elsewhere, naive fictions had arisen to justify "man's dominion over nature's social union". Eventually, the nobler *kami* were transferred to the heavens where they begat a colourful pantheon, most important of whom was the Divine Ancestress of the ruling family, but many of the creatures previously associating on equal terms with men became trivalised, threatening, or effeminate. The imperative of manliness inseparable from tribal skirmishing has always required belittling of the inner circle of domesticity, so that the diminutive animal life of barnyard and

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kitchen has often joined the tabus upon female biology as unclean spirits. The fox, from an earlier acceptance as guardian-spirit of corn- and rice-fields, became in Japan the bewitching female equivalent of the werewolf, while the snake, which has in warm regions enjoyed the same protection by womenfolk as the cat—as rat-catcher and predator upon all spoilers of grain—became the familiar spirit distrusted by nomads, footloose warriors, and priests.

When Mishima infuriated his British biographer by grumbling about "the green snake" haunting Japan, he was almost certainly teasing his friend by a mischievous play on the symbolism of the dollar seen as corrupting his nation, plus the attendant *kami* of womankind newly awarded previously inconceivable options. The combination of capitalist/feminist decadence deplored by Mishima is elaborated with increasingly animist significance in his work, culminating in his masterly tetralogy. It is given cruder but more concise form in an early novella, *The Sailor who Fell from Grace with the Sea,* a startling exposition of the conflict of ethics associated with gender. A "fall from grace" is usually religious. In this instance, it involves a defection from service to the sea-spirit, culpable mainly from the viewpoint of a school-boy voyeur, but partly in connection with the boy's mother, a Westernised war-widow. ("There wasn't a single Japanese room in Fusako's house,") For a naval officer to abandon his career and throw in his lot with this liberated woman was a sickening degradation in the eyes of the boy, a member of a junior terrorist group who had recently proved their own manhood by the slaughter of a kitten.

The boys conspire a similar end for the sailor, whose kindly American-style overtures to his prospective stepson have finally proved his unworthiness. The sailor himself has heard the voice of his sea-conscience saying, "Are you going to give up the life which has detached you from the world, impelled you towards a pinnacle of manliness?" His betrayal is therefore not merely from a schoolboy's perspective. Also the boys are not really boys but, in Mishima's private terminology, "angels". As agents for the sea-*kami,* they carry out the defector's execution.

Later, describing an even more drastic fall in *The Decay of the Angel,* Mishima is subtler and nastier. In this last work, "the green snake" has corrupted not only Japanese womenfolk but society at large. Ignoble civilian standards and capitalist rewards have enveloped both visible and spiritual worlds. The first volume of *The Sea of Fertility* is entitled *Spring Snow,* indicating youth not only undefiled but in a decent state of frigidity, albeit shadowed by Westernisation. The hero, from the wealthier (formerly Samurai) family, has been handed for polishing to an impoverished but decadent aristocrat. At first nobly insulted by the unsolicited adoration of the daughter of the house, he finally demonstrates his superiority by seducing her only when she is advantageously betrothed at a level requiring Imperial sanction (a Nietzschean amorality typical of Mishima's romantic situations). "It had been his most fervent hope to see her reduced to this state . . . the elegance he had absorbed from

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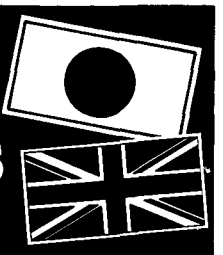

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his infancy under Count Ayakura's tutelage now became a silken cord in his hands, a noose for his innocence and Satako's sanctity." The victim, after resisting, "ducked her head, and like a sleeping fledgling, froze with her chin burrowed in the neck of her kimono."

When the angel-hero reports his triumph to his human friend—his "twin-soul" in this symbolist drama—the other youth pontificates:

> "The age of glorious wars ended with the Meiji era . . . this is the era of the war of the emotion. . . . You're fully resolved to die in this new war—am I right?"

For Mishima, moral regression has been confirmed by the Western-style acceptance of sex as a "serious" issue.

AMONG OTHER SIGNS of decay are the adoption of European dress, and the little symbolic animals which come out of hiding wherever there are women. A dead dog is found in the waterfall when it is visited by an abbess. Rats infest the library of the warrior-ancestor when the hero's tutor endures an unwanted tryst. Geishas, invited to entertain, inspire a remarkable dialogue on rodents as pets: "Very charming, but you wouldn't have them in the house." "The green snake" makes an appearance, too, when the light from an emerald falls on the photograph of the amorous betrothed of a visiting Siamese prince and is oddly identified as her heart—"the cold green heart of a small green snake".

The manifestation of the angel as lover terminates in hypothermia, from the snow surrounding the convent to which the beloved has retreated. This permits his reincarnation in the second volume, *Runaway Horses*—lower now, perhaps, in Mishima's non-Buddhist wheel of life since he has lost the facial beauty associated by animism with moral superiority; but also higher, since he has become an escetic cadet terrorist and *kendo* expert by the time he re-encounters his human self, who, having aged normally, has become a high-court judge.

The central event here is the failed coup of young Shinto fundamentalists which took place in the 1930s, echoing a bloodier event of the Meiji era after the Western-style rationalisation of the Army, and evoking the *kami-kaze* or gale-spirit believed to have defended Japan against the Mongol invasion. The historical rebellion ended in ritual mass suicide, described by Mishima in loving detail. The second angel, while prevented by imprisonment from following suit, dreams that he is killed by a snake. Humiliated, he reflects, "I was meant to die by cutting open my stomach". Worse, he dreams the next night that he is a woman. Pondering on the "manly death", he considers: "To be thus a man was to be required to give constant proof of one's manliness—to be more of a man today than yesterday, more a man tomorrow than today." And this is a project central to Mishima's credo.

The young militants claim their right to die by the sword if this will bring back the worship of the old gods, reduced by Meiji secularisation "to the level of feeble spirits, ephemeral beings who cling to life in the shelter of sprouting reeds rippling in the wind beside remote streams". Despite this scorn of the prettifying of the martial creed, the second section drifts into pre-Shintoist "botanical" mysticism. The young *kendoists* are bound to a treacherous patroness by the flowery symbolism of human sacrifice: ". . . lilies had come to express the very essence of life. The bud of one especially longstemmed lily seemed as pale as a tense young man on the verge of fainting." The *miko*, priestesses inherited from an earlier cult, ritually destroy the lilies at the Shinto flower-festival.

Despite his aversion, the angel's third manifestation is female. In *The Temple of Dawn*, he reappears as a Thai Princess, clearly associated with the green snake, which is seen "slithering from branch to branch" as she speaks. In the last two volumes (posthumous to Mishima's own chosen death) the split between the twin souls is increased by the decay of the angel-soul and the conventional ageing and Westernisation of the human. They are now linked by the semi-criminal voyeurism of the judge and the lesbianism of the she-angel, who welcomes death by snake-bite.

The fourth spiritual manifestation, though male, has all the vegetative qualities of the archaic faith. His body has "a sort of botanical slenderness", his hands are "like sterilised vegetables . . . . Sometimes evil took a quiet botanical shape." The angel's fall from grace is confirmed by a mad girl who demonstrates her *miko* identity by ritually crowning him with flowers. Adopted according to tradition by his now corrupt and elderly twin-soul, he is educated in the deviousness required for survival in the hell of Japanese occidentalisation, resulting in abortive suicide (Mishima's concept of ultimate disgrace), and is last seen with the female idiot, wallowing in filth and dead hollyhocks. But the pure soul-symbol of a butterfly guides his dying human self out of polluted modernity into the emptiness of a summer garden.

MISHIMA'S TIME-TRAVEL into archaic values is confused by his Westernisation. Like Nietzsche, he would like to present evil in conjunction with beauty as ethically neutral, while the Western ethic demands its association with heterosexual "sin". Never quite attaining the neutrality of primitive animism, he is arrested at an early aspect of heroic mystique, where the enemy of manliness is still the castrating mother, with the snake substituted for the sword, and divine execution for death in battle.

The image of Mishima as a fascist agitator who "endorsed the benighted system of Emperor-worship which led Japan into a futile war, from which it emerged with millions dead and a devastated homeland", was reluctantly accepted by his biographer. But is it true, either of the author or of his creed? Though internally quarrelsome, Imperial Japan had avoided major warfare for centuries, until enforced by the invasion of Western economic values—or so Mishima would seem to be suggesting. And the core of this Emperor-worship was self-sacrifice, not battle.

This curious metaphysic is central to another of Mishima's self-portraits, the devastating short story "Patriotism", based on a 20th-century suicide-pact, from which he also made a film with himself as hero—the young officer who, with his newly wedded bride, commits *seppuku* over a point of honour involving the integrity of the Imperial forces. In the historical

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incident, the young wife had left a note for her parents, saying, "The day which for a soldier's wife had to come, has come." At second glance, this is no conventional sentiment. In most nations the expected tragedy would be death in action, not ritual suicide; but it is almost certain that this mystique was the one Mishima was able to arouse in his band of unarmed cadets.

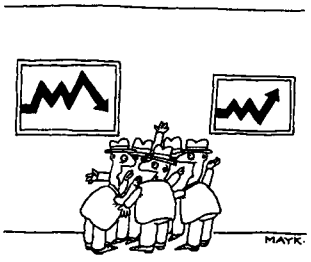
The concept of death for a sacred monarch, particularly if self-inflicted, differs from a soldier's death defending hearth and home. It guarantees the immortality of the monarch and a degree of participation for his loyal dedicatee. Mishima's Shintoism was no mere revival of a cult. It was the revival of the gods themselves, who depended for existence upon their worshippers. Their representative on earth was the ruler of Japan, a gentle civilian preoccupied with marine biology. It is here that Mishima's *Wahn*—his motivating fantasy—entered its terminal crisis in conflict with historical reality.

Besides his acquisition of obedient boy-soldiers as aides for the physical accomplishment of his martyrdom, Mishima had arranged for reporters and photographers to secure its dissemination, and staged a coup in which he literally captured a most unappreciative audience of modern militia. He had left a suicide note, intended presumably to be as clear as daylight, announcing merely that he had chosen immortality. But Mishima had miscalculated his nation's readiness for messianic redemption, just as he had overestimated its capacity to digest the symbolism in which he had clothed his intentions.

Penetration by an alien culture may be welcomed with collaboration or experienced as rape. The salvage of the cultural past may be seen in religious terms as justifying the supreme sacrifice. History has shown that this is occasionally effective, accepted as a divine apotheosis upon which to re-establish sovereignty. However, the magic of archaic ritual pales to incomprehensibility when it attempts to rival an "economic miracle".

Hidden Assumptions

Post-War Years at the Treasury—By VERNON BOGDANOR



EDWIN PLOWDEN was, like Dean Acheson, "present at the creation",[1] being one of that select group of men who helped determine policy in the last period when what Britain did still mattered to the rest of the world. Brought into government in March 1947 as Chief Planning Officer and Chairman of the Economic Planning Board, he remained until 1953. He thus had the experience of serving both Labour and Conservative governments, warning Churchill in 1952 against the "Robot" proposal to float the pound, just as he had three years earlier advised Attlee and Cripps on devaluation.

This was not thought in any way remarkable at a time when policy had yet to be subsumed by partisanship. For the assumption was then made, by contrast with the period of "adversary politics" which was to follow, that there was a genuine public interest in the work of government which lay over and above party politics. It is for this reason, perhaps, that the governments of the immediate post-War period made so much better use of officials than either their predecessors of the 1930s or their successors of the 1980s. Although he became a trusted adviser to three such different Chancellors of the Exchequer as Cripps, Gaitskell and Butler, there was never any possibility of Edwin Plowden becoming "one of us" in the sense in which Mrs Thatcher is said to use the phrase. Indeed, one has only to imagine the withering contempt with which Plowden would respond to such a notion to appreciate how much relations between ministers and officials have deteriorated in the post-War period.

Plowden, as Roy Jenkins points out in a highly perceptive foreword to *An Industrialist in the Treasury*,[2] was the product of an age which believed in rational solutions to political problems. The title of the book is something of a misnomer if it is meant to imply that Plowden brought what Jenkins calls "the urgent but limited perspectives of the boardroom to government". It is impossible to imagine him paraphrasing Secretary of Defence Charles E. Wilson on General Motors and saying "What is good for Tube Investments is good for Britain". Jenkins rightly compares Plowden to:

> ". . . a great French administrator, a product in the old days of one or other of the *Grandes Écoles*, more recently almost inevitably of the *École Nationale d'Administration*, who can turn his hand with versatility but without amateurism from the private to the public sector, from high policy to the profit-and-loss account."

The greatest of these figures was of course Jean Monnet, but he had a creative ability to which Plowden would not lay claim. A more appropriate comparison would be with figures such as Robert Marjolin or François Bloch-Lainé, men who played such a major role in the revival of French economic life in the post-War years.

The Central Economic Planning Staff, established by the

[1] Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation* (W. W. Norton, 1969).

[2] *An Industrialist in the Treasury: The Post-War Years*. By EDWIN PLOWDEN. Foreword by ROY JENKINS. André Deutsch, £15.95.

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Attlee Government in 1947, was a curious hybrid, designed not only to ensure tripartite cooperation in economic policy between government, unions and employers, but also to act as problem-solver for the government, and a source of policy advice to the Chancellor. It was a Neddy (National Economic Development Council), a CPRS (Central Policy Review Staff—the "think tank" which lasted from 1971 to 1983), and a ministerial *cabinet* all rolled into one. Institutions of this type are the product of an age in which practicality is prefered to ideology.

It is perhaps a paradox that a body such as the Central Economic Planning Staff was established by a government which had declared in its 1945 manifesto, *Let Us Face the Future,* that "The Labour Party is a Socialist Party and proud of it. Its ultimate purpose is the establishment of the Socialist Commonwealth of Great Britain".[3] Yet, although the government's aim was to bring about the transformation of society, it would be superficial to interpret the immediate post-War years in ideological terms. For, behind the abstract theories of socialism and capitalism, planning and *laissez-faire,* the real key to the period is the introduction of modern, Keynesian measures of economic management in place of the housekeeping approach of the 1930s. A new society *was* being created in the 1940s, but it had little to do with the blueprints of the socialist pioneers. It was a type of society in which the main political issues could be reduced to questions of economic management. "Macro-economic policy", declares Sir Alec Cairncross, in the best book yet written on the post-War Labour government:

> ". . . was born in the years after the war and survived more or less unchanged for at least two more decades. It is this, perhaps more even than the development of the welfare state, that gives these years a special coherence and significance, as if all that followed until well into the seventies was a comparatively uneventful extrapolation of post-War recovery. The very concept of managing the economy was new and little understood. While debate raged on abstract theories of planning, the practice of regulating economic activity through demand management was in course of development and improvement." [4]

IT WAS BECAUSE the aims of the Labour government were pragmatic rather than ideological that the Conservatives, despite their rhetoric of "setting the people free", followed, after 1951, many of the main lines of policy established by Labour. Indeed, Lord Croham has expressed the view that less change took place in 1951 than at any other transfer of power since the War.[5] After 1979, it became fashionable to sneer at the era of "consensus politics", and writers on both Left and Right told us that a sharpening of the political debate could secure inestimable benefits for the country. Yet the Attlee government, "one of the most able governments of modern times", according to Harold Macmillan,[6] not only had massive accomplishments to its credit; but its policies, unlike those of its successors, were implemented with the broad approval and consent of the British people. The consensus of the 1950s and the rise of Mr Butskell were themselves symbolic of widespread satisfaction with government, and the stature of the Attlee government grows, rather than diminishes, with the passage of time.

"If we had known in 1951", wrote Douglas Jay in 1980, "the history of the next twenty-five years, we should have felt very much more satisfied with the record of these early years than we did at the time." [7]

IN ADDITION to the colossal problems which the Attlee Government faced on the domestic front, the Labour government had to operate under the shadow of the Soviet threat. Here, also, it has become fashionable to discount the reality of this threat, sometimes seen as little more than "Cold War propaganda" designed to prop up American hegemony. Yet in 1950, the Soviet Union had 175 divisions in Europe—27 in East Germany alone—while NATO had only 12. Can we be positive that Stalin in his maniacal last years would not have taken advantage of Western Europe's insecurity? Can we be sure that the comparative restraint shown by Stalin in Europe during the last two years of his life had nothing to do with the rearmament of Western Europe, spearheaded by Britain? With Munich a painful and living memory for everyone in British public life in the 1940s, the Labour government can be forgiven, surely, for being unwilling to take a chance on Soviet good intentions. As Plowden shrewdly notices in *An Industrialist in the Treasury,* no government can ever be given credit for rearming. "If rearmament is successful in preventing a war it must always seem to have been too large; if it fails, as in the later 1930s, it always appears to have been too small." Any insurance policy, if it proves successful, comes to be taken for granted.

Plowden played a major role in the key decisions of the immediate post-War years, years in which the direction of British politics was being determined. For these were the years when Britain, dogged by the problems of economic recovery, nevertheless strove desperately to retain her position as a great power. Seeing herself as a partner of the United States and as head of the newly evolving multiracial Commonwealth, these were also the years in which Britain turned down the chance of leading the European movement. In all of the decisions which shaped the orientation of British post-War politics, Edwin Plowden was involved.

Plowden would, perhaps, quibble at the use of the term "decisions". Any reflective public servant must inevitably be aware of the role of chance and contingency in politics. For him, a decision does not present itself as something dramatic, something occurring at a particular moment of time, but rather as the almost inevitable outcome of a myriad of committees and working groups. Making a decision comes to seem less like constructing a bridge and more like the movement

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[3] Quoted in Samuel Beer, *Modern British Politics* (1965), p. 137.

[4] Alec Cairncross, *Years of Recovery: British Economic Policy 1945-51* (Methuen, 1985), p. 19.

[5] Cited in Peter Hennessy, *Whitehall* (Secker & Warburg, 1989), p. 144.

[6] Harold Macmillan, *Tides of Fortune* (Macmillan, 1979), p. 49.

[7] Douglas Jay, *Change and Fortune: A Political Record* (Hutchinson, 1980), p. 212.

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and gradual interlocking of organisms on a coral island. There appears to be no specific moment of time at which one can say that a decision has been taken. Decisions seem to emerge out of the bureaucratic process so that no one can really say, with any confidence, how they actually came about.

Such a perception of decision-making is naturally more appealing to the skilled administrator than the more heroic or romantic view to which the politician or the biographer is likely to give credence. But the administrator's perception can all too easily become fatalistic. Reflective and tolerant to a fault, he is always inclined to say that, given the concatenation of events and personalities, the outcome was predetermined by large impersonal forces which could not have been affected by individual action. It is, from this perspective, unreasonable to suggest that different decisions could have led to a different outcome, that what actually happened need not have happened. The improvements suggested by hindsight are always illusory. "I have emphasised", Plowden declares disarmingly at the outset,

> ". . . the importance of chance in my life. Chance can neither be foreseen nor planned for. There is always a tendency for people looking back at the past to wish that they or their forebears had planned and acted differently. They seem to believe, retrospectively, in freedom of choice. One of the themes of this book is that this belief is often an illusion. People forget the enormous influence that past events and experiences have on popular expectations and feelings. Our regrets about what we think we might have done or could have done are usually illusory.
>
> Most of us tend to judge past events in the light of what we know now, not by what we knew then and that, I believe, leads to the greatest illusions."

An Industrialist in the Treasury somehow mirrors this rather world-weary view. Edwin Plowden was a great public servant but he is a dry writer. Not having kept a diary or private papers, his book lacks the immediacy of a personal memoir. But the writing is scrupulous and honest, and reveals a good deal about the fundamental preconceptions of British policy in the immediate post-War years. Above all, it shows how the British government missed the European boat. By failing to join the European Coal and Steel Community in 1950, Britain began the process of contracting out from the role of European leadership which had been offered to her. It did not, however, require any exercise of hindsight to appreciate that a colossal blunder was being made. For there were those who appreciated it at the time.

THE CENTRAL assumption behind British policy was devastatingly dissected, not in the 1980s, but in the 1940s, by Sir Henry Tizard, Chief Scientific Adviser to the Ministry of Defence.

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tinue to behave like a Great Power we shall soon cease to be a great nation." [8]

In foreign affairs, the belief that Britain remained a Great Power entailed, in the words of Sir Edward Bridges, the Cabinet Secretary, "that in view of our world position and interests we should not commit ourselves irrevocably to Europe either in the political or the economic field unless we could measure the extent and effects of the commitment." [9] As Foreign Secretary, Ernest Bevin declared that "The Americans must realise that Britain is not part of Europe".

Britain favoured European cooperation, but only if it took place on the basis of intergovernmental collaboration, rather than a pooling of sovereignty which advocates of the European idea such as Jean Monnet and Robert Schuman held to be essential. The intergovernmental model allowed Britain to act as sponsor of European unity from outside—an idea present in the minds both of Bevin and Churchill—rather than as a full participant from within, something which our worldwide interests did not allow. The constitutional shibboleth of the absolute sovereignty of the Queen in Parliament was to merge with a vastly exaggerated estimate of Britain's power and influence, so as to inhibit that sharing of power which was necessary if Britain was to play a constructive part in the European Movement.[10]

Dean Acheson called Britain's failure to join the European Coal and Steel Community—forerunner of the European Community—"her great mistake of the postwar period".[11] Plowden believes that it was an unavoidable mistake.

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"It was an opportunity but not, in my view, a missed opportunity. There was no possibility of persuading the British people or any British government at that time to enter into the Coal and Steel Community on the terms laid down by the French. The terms were to cede control of two basic industries, coal and steel, to some supra-national body. To believe that it was a missed opportunity is to judge the events of nearly forty years ago in the light of what we know and believe today."

He adds, almost certainly correctly, that a Conservative administration in 1950 would have acted no differently.

YET THERE WERE wiser voices even in 1950. Admittedly, the *New Statesman*, with its usual ineffable logic, declared that the agreement between Schuman and Adenauer to establish the Coal and Steel Community was the outcome of a conspiracy of the Vatican, Rühr industrialists and the *Comité des Forges*. But, according to Plowden, Sir Stafford Cripps, as Chancellor, told the Cabinet that Britain should participate in the Schuman Plan. "He said he realised that the proposal might lead to political federation but thought that this would not come until later."

Sir Oliver Harvey, Britain's Ambassador in Paris, declared that the Schuman Plan "represents a turning point in European and indeed in world affairs. This is a never-to-be repeated opportunity of getting a real move on in Europe. The French have made a startling, and indeed revolutionary proposal—We really have the ball at our feet." While Sir Robert Hall in the Economic Section of the Treasury, thinking that British industry could benefit from access to a wider market, took the view "that we have no option but to welcome the move and to wish for luck. . . ."[12] And a new backbench MP, Edward Heath, made a brave maiden speech urging Britain to accept the Schuman Plan. But it was all to no avail. The Cabinet was determined to reject it.

Plowden tells the tragi-comic story of how the rejection took place. On 1 June 1950, the French Government declared that the establishment of the High Authority of the Coal and Steel Community had become an "immediate objective" and sought, by 7 p.m. the following day, a definite decision on whether Britain accepted its supranational status. Attlee and Cripps were both abroad on holiday, Bevin was ill, and other Ministers were out of London for the Whitsun break. Plowden, together with Kenneth Younger, Bevin's deputy at the Foreign Office, had to track down Herbert Morrison, who was in charge of the government during Attlee's absence. They eventually found him in the Ivy Restaurant, having dinner with friends following a visit to the theatre.

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[8] Quoted in Peter Hennessy, *Whitehall*, p. 155.

[9] From a Cabinet paper written on 2 June 1950, in Edwin Plowden, *An Industrialist in the Treasury*, p. 91.

[10] Compare, for a modern assessment, Vernon Bogdanor, "Britain and Europe: The Myth of Sovereignty", in Richard Holme and Michael Elliott (eds), *1688-1988: Time for a New Constitution* (Macmillan, 1988).

[11] *Present at the Creation*, p. 385.

[12] Kenneth O. Morgan, *Labour in Power 1945-1951* (Clarendon Press, 1984), p. 418.

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> "I said, 'Lord President we must have a word with you in private.' He, not unreasonably, said, 'Why can't it wait until tomorrow morning?' When I said it could not, we retired to a sort of passage at the back of the restaurant where spare tables and chairs were stored. We explained the French ultimatum. After a pause for thought he said, 'It's no good. We can't do it: the Durham miners wouldn't like it.' . . ."

"He was right", Plowden adds, "the Durham miners, and indeed all workers in the coal and steel industries, would not have liked it." Yet it is not clear on what this confident judgment is based. Sam Watson, leader of the Durham miners, was very much in favour of European integration, and later became one of the strongest of Labour's pro-marketeers. Is there really any reason to believe that level-headed trade-unionists would not have responded to resolute and determined leadership? The truth is that Herbert Morrison's patronising remark seems little more than an excuse to avoid having to re-examine those assumptions of great power status which bore, even in 1950, only a very tenuous connection with reality.

From the perspective of the 1980s, Plowden draws the appropriate moral. There was a colossal "lack of appreciation of how weak economically this country had become. I do not believe that, at that time, any Minister, shadow Minister, official, journalist, commentator, or the general public truly grasped the real extent of our economic difficulties and our economic weakness." What precluded Britain from understanding her changed role in the world was the force of traditional assumptions about power, assumptions which challenged and finally defeated rational pragmatists such as Edwin Plowden.

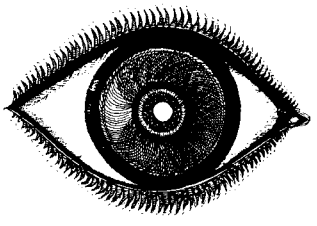
But, whether one accepts Plowden's conclusions or not, it is well worth going on to ask oneself the question with which he concludes his book. What are the equivalent "assumptions and prejudices of today which will seem equally obsolete in thirty years time? Can we learn from our history rather than being imprisoned by it? I am not altogether sure that we can, but the effort is worth making."

Two Americans, a political scientist and an historian, have recently identified some of the hidden assumptions of American politics which have constrained policy-makers.[13] Can the same be done for Britain? Perhaps Lord Plowden should write another book on the hidden "assumptions and prejudices" of today, and how we can best expose and discard them. There can be few men in public life better equipped to undertake the task.

[13] Richard E. Neustadt and Ernest R. May, *Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision Makers* (The Free Press, New York, 1986). This is a fascinating work, indispensable for the contemporary historian.

The Indicating Eye

Herbert Read as Poet—By Anna Adams



It should be natural to remember one's teachers with gratitude, but I had all but forgotten Herbert Read, who must have been one of mine since I bought and read his poems when I was eighteen or so. He didn't teach me to teach (Heaven forfend), though "Education through Art" was one of his tenets, and a subject for much prose; but, having reopened the fifty or so pages of poetry that I bought in 1945, I find that I still know a great many lines and two whole poems by heart. "Yes, yes/and ever it will come to this:/Life folds like a fan with a click" (from "Epitaph"), and "Against the windowpane/against the temple of my brain/ beat the muffled taps of rain" ("Summer Rain").

Such fragments may sometimes have been quoted jokily, but the "Song for the Spanish Anarchists" was a poem that I remembered whole.

The golden lemon is not made
but grows on a green tree:
A strong man and his crystal eyes
is a man born free.

The oxen pass under the yoke
and the blind are led at will:
But a man born free has a path of his own
and a house on the hill.

And men are men who till the land
and women are women who weave:
Fifty men own the lemon grove
and no man is a slave.

This is not the place to ask what the women own and whether or not they are slaves, but only to remark that if this poem may not be quite Blake, it *is* Blakean, and it is, or was, about Now when it was written, then. Herbert Read was a man like other men, embedded in history. He may have tried to escape into the purity of aesthetics and abstract art, but could not, so he wrote about the Spanish Civil War while it was still happening; and a newspaper photograph gave rise to another long-remembered poem, "Bombing Casualties in Spain".

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Dolls' faces are rosier, but these were children,
Their eyes not glass but gleaming gristle. . . .

The dead children lie like

. . . paper lanterns that have fallen
after a night of riot,
extinct in the dry morning air.

The idea of riots of destruction is one that recurs in Read's work. He had taken part in a big one as a young man, and his first book was of war poems (*Naked Warriors*, published in 1919).[1] Though he is mainly remembered as an influential art critic and educational theorist, I think of him as primarily a poet, because poetry was the field in which he actually practised an art. As the Bishop said when reproached about his rakish young manhood: "If you are going to preach about Sin it is better to have worked in the medium"; and the same goes for any sort of critic. To work humbly at an art, and to fail frequently, is the way to learn the rules and how to break them, and how to sympathise with the work of others.

Herbert Read was also an Anarchist of the most harmless kind. His bombs were poems. He used, in those far-off days when I was eighteen, to lecture to a group of wordmongering Anarchists who met in a murky room somewhere off the Euston Road. He spoke about Art and Anarchism, and tried to explain Existentialism, then fresh out of France. The London Anarchist Group listened respectfully, and his pamphlets were printed by their Freedom Press. He was a star turn until one day he accepted a knighthood; after that the Anarchists managed without him. Then, either I had some babies or I left London, or both, and I discovered that writing my own poetry was a more satisfactory form of subversion than verbose meetings in smoke-filled rooms where I never dared to speak. So I forgot about the Anarchists as well as Herbert Read; or I thought I had forgotten.

His books gathered moleskins of dust on high shelves in my house until a few years ago, when the main art exhibition at an Ilkley Festival was devoted to my old intellectual flame. His perceptiveness as an art critic was demonstrated by the pictures he had acquired before their painters' names had become household words. There were early Henry Moore sculptures in glass cases, some Paul Nash paintings, and manuscripts and first editions of Read's books, including *Naked Warriors*, with its Vorticist block on the cover. There were also photographs of the man himself, at various ages.

I remember one of these particularly. It was a group portrait of several First World War officers. The year may have been 1917. The picture was not taken on leave in England, but somewhere in France, and the individuals in it appeared to have been fetched straight from the firing-line in order to be shot by the camera. Their shocked and dazed faces had a charred look, as though they had been pulled out of a bonfire just in time. Well might the young Herbert Read have taken refuge in the cool formality of Cubism when he finally "crawled out of that mess/with two medals and a gift of blood money" at the end of 1918.

First of all he was resolved "to tell the truth without rhetoric/the truth about war and about men/involved in the indignities of war." He did so in such poems as "Kneeshaw goes to War" and "The Execution of Cornelius Vane", who was a normally cowardly human being, shot for desertion. Kneeshaw, who may be an aspect of Herbert Read himself, is a semi-conscious and inarticulate man. He is not stupid: his thoughts, when he begins to think them, are interesting enough. He thinks while on "the romantic fringes" of war. "Then, with many other men,/He was transported in a cattle truck/To the scene of war."

Arras was a picnic:
But Ypres . . .
That ghastly desolation
Sank into men's hearts and turned them black.

Kneeshaw felt he had become

A cog in some great evil engine,
Unwilling but revolved tempestuously
By unseen springs. . . .

After sundry horrors Kneeshaw is wounded; then,

Minus a leg, on crutches,
Stalked the woods and hills of his native land.

He is miraculously cured of guilt, and has found his voice, so he sings "Kneeshaw's Warsong".

I stand on this hill and accept
The pleasure my flesh dictates. . . .

The last verse runs:

The soul is not a dogmatic affair
Like manliness, colour and light,
But these essentials there be:
To speak truth and from this hill
Let burning stars irradiate the contemplated sky.

To us today, this seems to be rhetorical and even meaningless language; but in 1919 it passed as poetry and passed on the survivor's message. It cannot be compared to the work of Wilfred Owen, who had served his apprenticeship to poetry before the War, and had learned that poetry is not made of abstract generalisations. This is a lesson that Herbert Read had a tendency to forget throughout his life, though in his best works he masters it.

Having written his war poems, Read then fulfilled the promise he made in the second part of his brief preface to the book that contained them. He turned "from the sickness of life revealed . . . to the serenity of some disinterested beauty. In that way we may so progress that our

[1] The works by Herbert Read mentioned in this article are: *Naked Warriors* (Arts and Letters Press, 1919); *Wordsworth* (Faber and Faber, 1930, 1968); *The Meaning of Art* (Faber, 1931, et seq.); *The Green Child* (Heinemann, 1935; Grey Walls Press, 1945); *Art and Society* (Heinemann, 1936; Faber, 1945); *Thirty-Five Poems* (Faber, 1940); *A World Within a War* (Faber, 1944); *The Education of Free Men* (Freedom Press, 1944); *Poetry and Anarchism* (Faber, 1938; Freedom Press, 1947); *Collected Poems of Herbert Read* (Faber, 1946, 1953); *Moon's Farm* (Faber, 1955).

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ethical rage gives us duly an aesthetic sanction." He became the author of such books as *The Meaning of Art* (1931), *Art Now* (1933), *Art and Industry* (1934), and an interesting study—based on false premises—of Wordsworth; and he worked at the poetry. As a peacetime poet he got as much out of books as from raw life, and he became somewhat too scholarly, seeming to walk across cedar-wood floors to take down leather-bound books from high shelves in order to make references to persons and events we have never heard of; he wrote as an educated man for educated men.

He came to life again in the civilian war poems of the Second World War, and its prelude the Spanish Civil War. War aroused a moral passion in him. In the "Ode Written during the Battle of Dunkirk" (now known as the Battle of Britain) he referred to the years between the Wars as years of "faith formulated but not maintained/twenty years/without design".

Earlier in this same poem he justified those years.

It is right to forget
sights that the mind cannot accommodate
terror that cannot be described
experience that cannot be exorcised in thought.

It is natural for others to resent
the parade of wounds
eyes haunted with unrevealed sorrows
the unholy pride of sacrifice.

Human, to relapse
into the old ways. . . .

THIS POETRY cannot compare with Louis MacNeice's Troll booming and banging about the sky in the air-raids on London.[2] It still leans towards abstract generalisations. Yet it is of interest because it is true to the experience of a sensitive and thoughtful man whose situation was still that of a mouse or a bird in the clutches of the History Cat. He was keeping his equilibrium and describing the world as he saw it in 1940.

As the evening deepens
searchlights begin to waver in the sky
the airplanes throb invisibly above me. . . .

This war was, for him, still unreal:

. . . a voice out of a cabinet
a printed sheet, and these faint reverberations
selected in the silence
by my attentive ear.

Though he believed in "free verse"', and his chosen mentors were Walt Whitman and D. H. Lawrence, the best poems achieve a formal pattern.

This is the hour of retribution
the city shaken, the power taken
from palsied hands.

This is the hour of retribution
the last farewell and the repetition
of the father's sacrifice. . . .

This is the hour of retribution
the sense of glory kindled, dwindling in the steel cabin
choked with burnt petrol.

The masterpiece among these war poems of a bystander is the sequence called "A World Within a War". It describes a small and local peace, Read's own situation and attitude.

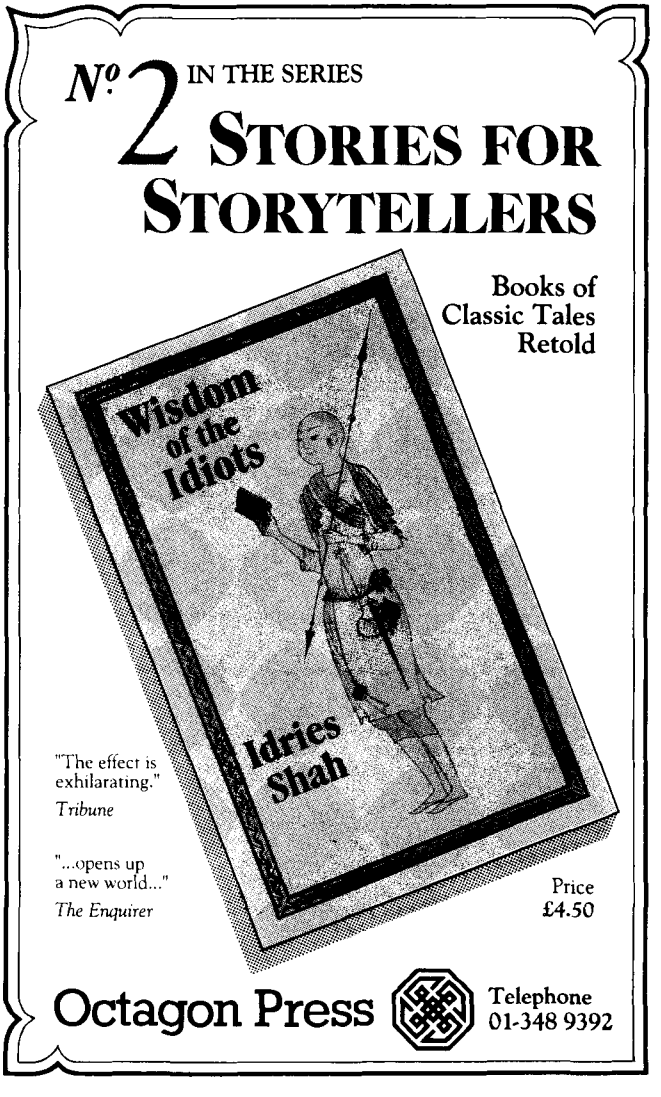
Sedate within this palisade
Which unforethinking I have made

Of brittle leaves and velvet flowers
I re-indite a Book of Hours. . . .

My saints were often silly men
Fond of wine and loose with women.

When they rose to holy stature
They kept the whims of human nature

[2] Louis MacNeice, "Troll's Courtship", May 1941, in his *Collected Poems*, ed. E. R. Dodds (Faber and Faber, 1949).



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Were mystics in their London gardens
Or wore instead of hairshirts burdens

Of a mild domestic sort: but so devout
That suddenly they would go out

And die for freedom in the street. . . .

IF THE poems are unequal, and some are not quite poetry, it was as a poet, constrained by the economies of verse, that he wrote his best prose. *The Green Child* (1935), his only novel, might have been better and shorter had it been written as a long poem. It is very unsatisfactory as a novel.

When I read it at the age of twenty-one, and was disappointed, I thought that the fault lay in me and my incomplete education. "Everything must mean more than it appears to mean", I told myself, "and I haven't done enough background reading. I know too little history and have never read Plato's *Republic*." But I had, after all, read some Hardy, Tolstoy, and Zola; and they too had read a great many books that I had not, but their novels had been full of living characters battling with difficult problems, and they were very far from tedious. Herbert Read was simply not the stuff of which novelists are made.

The Green Child is made up of the description of two Utopias, neither of which is of much interest because the inhabitants of both are more like ants or bees than people. An interesting novel might have been written about how the hero, Olivero, attained to his moral perfection of character, for he seems to be effortlessly good. His lack of inner conflict of any kind makes him extremely unreal, and unreality in a fictional character nullifies any amount of nobility and selflessness.

As the benevolent dictator of Roncador, and as a subject in the underground home of the Green People, Olivero covets no wealth, abuses no power, can take it or leave it as far as lust is concerned, and has no tendencies to sloth or gluttony. he doesn't even bite his nails or pick his nose, though such bad habits might have helped to give him a physical presence, and his overcoming of them might just have supplied a dramatic subplot.

But not only is there no conflict within the clockwork hero, who resembles Raskolnikov in nothing: there is no conflict between him and anyone else, except for a few brief bursts of blood and thunder. There aren't really any other characters, only a few vague shadows, mostly male, who do exactly what Olivero expects of them, including laying down their arms and crying "Pax", or falling into mill-streams and drowning, at the earliest possible moment in the story.

The first Utopia, Roncador, is based on the historical South American Jesuit communities, but without the religion, and the second Utopia is the subterranean world where Olivero ends his days (if his days are not already over and this is really a department of Purgatory); it is a sinless world where the young play and make love, older people do manual labour and practise abstract art in the form of crystal-cutting, and the very oldest and wisest become hermits to whom the artists bring crystals to contemplate. Before embarking on this final and solitary phase of life, Olivero is allowed to soften the transition by keeping a pet dung-beetle which he calls Cypher. None of the other cyphers in this community has any name or personality at all.

When Olivero was running things from his despot's office in Roncador, he had considered introducing an educational system for his contentedly myrmecoid subjects, but he didn't do so because he preferred not to disturb their tranquillity.

COULD HERBERT READ, at the time of writing this book, really have thought that intelligence and independent thought were the result of education, and not education the result of intelligence and independent thought? If he did, he changed his mind later, so all is forgiven (except the tedium of his novel). By 1944 he was preaching Salvation through Education; his idea of education was prophetically comprehensive, and "through Art".

My education was partly through the BBC Third Programme, but when *Moon's Farm* was broadcast in 1951 it escaped my notice, and by the time it was published by Faber and Faber in 1955 I was too busy reading about Natural Childbirth and consulting Dr Spock's instruction manual, delivered with most new infants at that time, to have been aware of much else. So I read it for the first time quite recently, and now it has a personal interest for me because I have lived for more than 25 years in just such a landscape as that in which Herbert Read's verse dialogue is set.

Moon's Farm is about the return to the scene of his childhood by a middle-aged poet, and it is written for three voices. The first is the female Spirit of the Place, who sets the scene; the second is the Poet; and the third is the mysterious Father—who may have something to do with Read's human father, who died when the poet was ten, but is more likely to represent Time. It is unlikely that Herbert Read would have written God the Father into his text, for in another poem in the same volume he writes:

I believe in my unbelief—would not force
One fibre of my being to bend in the wind
Of determinate doctrine. In doubt is stillness. . . .

This father-figure is, nevertheless, ambiguous.

The Old Woman makes us see a bleak Yorkshire dale at

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the head of a beck, and she describes what was once there and how it has changed. The second voice is amazed at:

how completely a solid structure
like a farmhouse
can vanish in fifty years!
The stones they would carry off
to make a new road
miles away
But what happened to the trees?
there was even a stunted orchard
all gone.

The Poet then becomes aware of the Old Woman, and as they converse he tells her of his motive in coming.

I left fifty years ago
as a boy of ten
I went far away
into another country.
Today, for the first time
I have come back.
I find everything changed.

A little later in the conversation the poet says, patronisingly:

You speak like an educated woman
yet you say
you have never left the dale.

She answers:

I have never left the dale: my schooling
was indeed simple.

Then he:

But apparently profound.
I went to many schools but was no wiser in the end.

HERBERT READ is back on the theme of education, but the arrival of the Father changes the direction of the conversation. The poet discusses the nature of God with the Old Man, while the Old Woman goes off to make the Poet's bed. Though he may have set out to learn from Place and Time, he proceeds to lecture them, and they are reduced to prompting him with questions so that he can impart his knowledge and understanding. Yet the work is moving; it seems to have been shaken from the writer by his first encounter with his own death. Perhaps Read had already experienced the onset of the cancer that killed him. The Poet is concerned about how to die well, and thinks that if he could "at the last moment/see some bright image" then he would die "without fear and trembling".

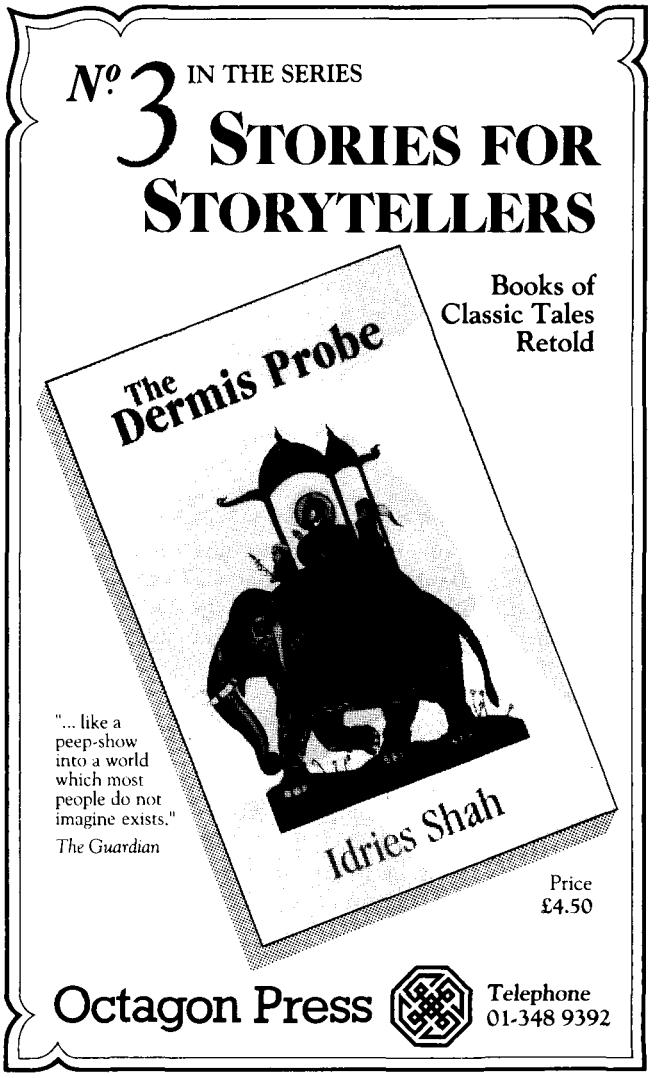
It is when we look into the abyss of nothingness
infinite nothingness
that we lose courage
and die swearing
or die praying.

The Old Woman says: "Yes: men should hold on to tangible things." (And so should poets, say I.)

The voices at the end instruct him: "Live in the moment of attention . . . Live in the presence of things"; and in his very last speech the poet says:

As boys we used to come here
to gather wild daffodils.
At Moon's Farm the pump was in the kitchen
a well of clean crystal water
And there was an old clock
standing opposite the kitchen door.
It had a robin
or perhaps it was a wren
painted on its white face
but the fingers never moved
It was always 12.25 at Moon's Farm.
12.25 is God's time.

LIKE MANY AGNOSTICS (including myself), Read had a God fixation, but before returning to this abstraction he has told us something of the boyhood and the self that he came to Moon's Farm to discover. Perhaps it is not very remarkable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poetry; but if a man has written one or two poems in which thought and language cohere so that a new constellation of words shines and keeps its place in the crowded firmament of poetry, then he is more than the background music of his period and has made a lasting contribution.

The second of Herbert Read's poems that I can remember whole after 40 years, is, I think, a permanent poem. It contains in highly compressed though simple form the essence of Read's thinking. It is abstract but illuminated by images and, after his many years as an art critic, it is about the nature of art. This art, though, could be inspired action. It is about inspiration versus calculation, and for me it has been a touchstone. It is called "Emblem".

In measure and in marksmanship
lies the exactitude of death.
Through the neat red wound in the pale brow
the bullet has driven a path.

With calliper and compass
and a straight divided rule
the Arab made the rose a rosette
to prove himself a fool.

Beauty has no other reason
than the eye can indicate.
Only the miraculous conception
is immaculate.

"We Are All Greeks . . ."

Shelley & the Near East—By CHARLES ISSAWI

SHELLEY WAS A marvellous lyric poet, but he was much more than that. A voracious and insatiable reader, he spent almost all his waking hours with books, even when eating or walking in city streets, and took in philosophy, science, history, and literature with equal zest. He was an extremely perceptive critic—one of the very first to recognise the genius of Keats, this "rival who will far surpass me", and he mourned him in one of his finest poems, "Adonaïs". He was equally appreciative of Byron, and at once declared that *Don Juan* was his masterpiece—"every word is stamped with immortality". He was a good shot—as good as Byron. An excellent linguist, he translated Plato, Virgil, Spinoza, Dante, Tasso, Calderon, Goethe and others (and also the *Marseillaise)*. He studied the philosophers, including the English empiricists, the French materialists and Kant, and had a special admiration for Plato and Bishop Berkeley.

He was also a keen and knowledgeable scientist, particularly interested in chemistry, electricity, astronomy, and meteorology (his early chemical and electrical experiments exposed him and those around to bodily harm and thoroughly messed up his rooms at home and at Oxford). Indeed, A. N. Whitehead goes so far as to say: "If Shelley had been born a hundred years later, the twentieth century would have seen a Newton among chemists." Less contestably, he points out: "It is unfortunate that Shelley's literary critics have, in this respect, so little of Shelley in their own mentality."[1]

Shelley looked to science for both illumination and practical application, and saw clearly the use of chemistry for agriculture and the enormous potential of electric energy. Many passages in his poems—notably in "Prometheus", "Ode to the West Wind" and "The Cloud"—embody the science of their day, or even of a later day, and can be fully understood only in that light; this includes many verses which at first may strike the reader as incomprehensible, or indeed pure nonsense.[2]

Another aspect of Shelley's interest in science and technology showed in his financing, and active participation in, the construction of what would have been the first steamboat in the Mediterranean, intended to ply between Leghorn and Marseilles. The project cost him £400, but the world gained his delightful, humorous "Letter to Maria Gisborne", where he describes himself at work amid "great screws, and cones, and wheels, and grooved blocks".

But Shelley was too good a poet to believe that science alone could ensure salvation. In *A Defence of Poetry* (1821, published 1846) he puts it beautifully:

> "The cultivation of those sciences which have enlarged the limits of the empire of man over the external world has for want of the poetical faculty proportionally circumscribed those of the internal world; and man, having enslaved the elements, remains himself a slave."

Shelley was a vegetarian, and wrote a treatise on that subject. He was a strong feminist, as befitted the husband of Mary Wollstonecraft's daughter. *The Revolt of Islam* has that rousing line: "Can man be free if woman be a slave?", and his heroine is as strong and dedicated as his hero. He was also an amazingly kind, unselfish man, exceptionally and often foolishly generous with his time and money. Many stories told about him show an almost saintly quality. Byron, as shrewd and cynical an observer as one could wish for, described him

[1] A. N. Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World* (1926), p. 104.

[2] For an excellent study of this aspect, see Desmond King-Hele, *Shelley, His Thought and Work* (1960), ch. viii. I am indebted to this book for various references throughout my article: see, in particular, pp. 296, 322, 365, 45, 149.

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as "without exception the best and least selfish man I ever knew". However, Shelley treated his first wife with a callousness that is hard to understand. It should also be added that he struck some people—including his father—as a lunatic.[3] But then:

> *The lunatic, and the poet the lover*
> *Are of imagination all compact . . . .*

And Shelley's white-hot imagination made him see and report many things that probably never happened.

Finally, and most important, Shelley was passionately interested in politics from his earliest youth. A born rebel, he soon espoused every revolutionary cause, and came to be regarded as the most dangerous of the younger poets. Of course, he did his best to exasperate the Establishment with poems like *The Masque of Anarchy* and the sonnet "England in 1819". He positively courted unpopularity by his infantile habit of proclaiming his atheism on every possible occasion, even when he registered at a hotel.

KARL MARX, no mean authority, said that Shelley, had he lived, "would always have been one of the advanced-guard of socialism", and is reported to have stated that he "had inspired a good deal of . . . the Chartist movement". As late as the 1930s "a group of Communists in a Milwaukee jail were reported to have attempted to convert fellow prisoners by reading *Queen Mab* aloud"—and at about the same time hunger-marchers in Toronto chanted *The Masque of Anarchy*.

And yet, unnoticed by his enemies and also by many of his admirers, Shelley's view of revolution changed radically. Deeper study of the French Revolution convinced him that such uprisings merely replace one tyranny by another. The French, brutalised by King, Church and nobles, behaved brutally when in power and called forth the Napoleonic reaction—which of course does not mean that oppression should be passively accepted. As Shelley wrote in his preface to *The Revolt of Islam* in 1817, when the panic created by the French Revolution was "gradually giving place to sanity":

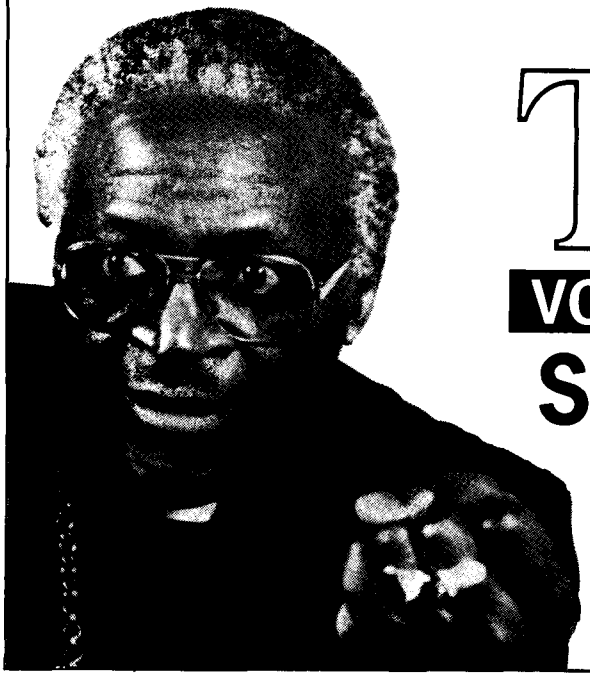
> ". . . it has ceased to be believed that whole generations of mankind ought to consign themselves to a hopeless inheritance of ignorance and misery, because a nation of men who had been dupes and slaves for centuries were incapable of conducting themselves with the wisdom and tranquillity of freemen as soon as some of their fetters were partially loosened."

Revolution demands a long and arduous moral preparation and should be carried out by passive resistance—calmly facing troops, not attacking them but never running away. This is very much what Gandhi practised so successfully in India, though his inspiration came from other sources.

Shelley's political views are spelled out in *The Masque of Anarchy* and in his 1819 pamphlet, *A Philosophical View of Reform,* for which he could not find a publisher and which was not printed until 1920. It is a calm, closely reasoned call for constitutional, economic and judicial reforms, almost all

[3] See Newman Ivey White, *Shelley* (1940), Vol. II, pp. 382, 419, and, for later references, pp. 417, 541-44, 329.

WHAT DOES ARCHBISHOP DESMOND TUTU MEAN TO THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH AFRICA?



TUTU

VOICE OF THE VOICELESS

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of which were implemented in the course of the next hundred years. It contains a quick view of history as the unfolding of liberty, in which his main landmarks are the birth of liberty in Greece, its suppression by Imperial Rome and the Catholic Church, and its gradual recovery during the Reformation, the establishment of the Dutch Republic, the English Revolutions, the American Revolution, and the French Revolution. He sees everywhere signs of the awakening of peoples—Germany, Spain, Latin America, and elsewhere. This brings him to the Near East.

In 1815, Shelley had read Simon Ockley's *History of the Saracens* (3 vols, 1708-57), and both before and after that he read and reread Gibbon. In 1820, he started to study Arabic. On 29 October he wrote to John Gisborne: "Can you tell me anything about Arabic grammars, dictionaries, and manuscripts, and whether they are vendible at Leghorn, and whether there are any native Arabs capable of teaching the language." And on 15 November to Thomas Love Peacock: "A school fellow of mine from India is staying with me and we are beginning Arabic together." [4] It is not clear how much progress he made, but in 1821 he wrote "From the Arabic: An Imitation". What the original could have been—or whether indeed there was a specific original—is not known. Most of his information on the Near East, however, must have come from what in the preface to *Hellas* he disparagingly called his "newspaper erudition".

In Shelley's vision, the fermentation of liberty was extending to Asia. He starts with India, whose development was to have such a great influence on the Near East, through its British rulers. Remarkably, Shelley regards Christianity—to which he was so opposed at home—as the first force of regeneration in India: ". . . it cannot be doubted but the zeal of the missionaries of what is called the Christian faith will produce beneficial innovation there, even by the application of dogmas and forms of what is here an outworn incumbrance." In addition, there are secular forces at work:

> "Many native Indians have acquired, it is said, a competent knowledge in the arts and philosophy of Europe, and Locke and Hume and Rousseau are familiarly talked of in Brahminical society. But the thing to be sought is that they should as they would if they were free attain to a system of arts and literature of their own."

The works of Rammohan Roy (1772-1833) show that he was not exaggerating the degree of ferment.

Shelley begins his survey of the Near East with Iran. "Of Persia we know little but that it has been the theatre of sanguinary contests for power, and that it is now at peace. The Persians appear to be from organisation a beautiful, refined, and impassioned people and would probably soon be infected by the contagion of good."

What of the Jews? Here Shelley indulges in a bold speculation: "The Jews, that wonderful people which has preserved so long the symbols of their union, may reassume their ancestral seats." (It may be noted that, 30 years earlier, in "A Song of Liberty", William Blake had exclaimed, "O Jew, leave counting gold; return to thy oil and wine. . . .")

Arabia? "In Syria and Arabia the spirit of human intellect has roused a sect of people called Wahabees, who maintain the Unity of God, and the equality of man, and their enthusiasm must go on 'conquering and to conquer' even if it must be repressed in its present shape."

Egypt? Shelley was appreciative of the work being done by Muhammad Ali (to whom, for some mysterious reason, he refers as Ottoman Bey):

> ". . . a person of enlightened views who is introducing European literature and arts, and is thus beginning that change which Time, the great innovator, will accomplish in that degraded country; and by the same means its sublime enduring monuments may excite lofty emotions in the hearts of the posterity of those who now contemplate them without admiration."

Here again he was right about the complete neglect and subsequent enthusiastic discovery by the Egyptians of their monuments. He adds an appreciative footnote:

> "This person sent his nephew to Lucca to study European learnings, and when his nephew asked with reference to some branch of study at enmity with Mahometanism whether he was permitted to engage in it, he replied, 'You are at liberty to do anything which will not injure another.'"

When it comes to Turkey, Shelley's attitude is very different. The Turks he saw only as the oppressors of the Greeks, the people who had devastated their lands. In this he was one of the first of many European liberals who execrated the Turks as enemies of freedom and national independence in the Balkans and Near East. Hegel, refuting Geographical Determinism with his devastating "Where the Greeks once lived the Turks now live", is another contemporary example. It is perhaps worth pointing out that in *Frankenstein* Mary Shelley has a villainous Turk—and his admirable daughter—born of a Christian Arab mother and herself referred to as such.

Shelley's love and admiration for the Ancient Greeks was one of his strongest passions. Again and again he repeats that almost all that was worthwhile in Europe came from Greece. Hence his statement in this pamphlet:

> "The Turkish Empire is in its last stage of ruin, and it cannot be doubted but that the time is approaching when the deserts of Asia Minor and of Greece will be colonized by the overflowing population of countries less enslaved and debased, and that the climate and the scenery which was the birthplace of all that is wise and beautiful will not remain forever the spoil of wild beasts and unlettered Tartars"
>
> —a prophecy that was only half correct.

One might have expected *The Revolt of Islam,* written in 1817, to deal with the Near East; but although it is located in Greece and the overthrown tyrant is named Othman, there is no suggestion of any local colour or background. The title

[4] Percy Bysshe Shelley, *Complete Works* (Julian edition, London, 1926-29), Vol. X, pp. 216, 223.

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was apparently suggested by Shelley's friends in England, to remove suspicions that he was attacking Christianity. However the outbreak of the Greek War of Independence in 1821 immediately focused his attention on that country.

LIKE MANY passionate Hellenists, Shelley took a dim view of modern Greeks—just as many Orientalists think very poorly of Arabs or Persians. Byron had contributed to this with his notes to Canto Two of *Childe Harold,* and Shelley's friend Trelawney had taken him on to a Greek trading ship whose dirt and squalor reminded him more of Hell than Hellas. Another Greek captain he knew was opposed to the war because it was bad for trade. And, whether Shelley was aware of it or not, the fact is that the Greek Phanariots—the rich merchants and bankers of Constantinople—and the Patriarch were also opposed to the revolt.

But to Shelley none of that really mattered. As he put it in the Preface to *Hellas*:

> "If in many instances [the Greek] is degraded by moral and political slavery to the practice of the basest vices it engenders—and that below the level of ordinary degradation—let us reflect that the corruption of the best produces the worst, and that habits which subsist only in relation to a peculiar state of social institution may be expected to cease as soon as that relation is dissolved."

Besides, progress was already taking place. Greeks were returning home from "the universities of Italy, Germany and France. . . . The University of Chios contained before the breaking out of the revolution eight hundred students, and among them several Germans and Americans." Above all Shelley was inspired by Prince Alexander Mavrocordato, one of the leaders of the revolt, whom he got to know well at Leghorn. In the Preface to *Hellas* he repeats: "We are all Greeks. Our laws, our literature, our religion, our arts have their root in Greece." But for Greece, Rome would have "spread no illumination with her arms".

In another striking prophecy, Shelley couples Rome with the United States:

> *Rome was, and young Atlantis shall become*
> *The wonder, or the terror, or the tomb*
> *Of all whose step wakes Power lulled in*
> *her savage lair*

But Greece is different:

> *. . . a hermit-child*
> *Whose fairest thoughts and limbs were built*
> *To woman's growth, by dreams so mild,*
> *She knew not pain or guilt.*

The whole civilised world should have rushed to aid Greece. Instead:

> "The English permit their own oppressors to act according to their natural sympathy with the Turkish tyrant, and to brand upon their name the indelible blot of an alliance with the enemies of domestic happiness, of Christianity and civilisation.
>
> Russia desires to possess, not to liberate, Greece; and is contented to see the Turks, its natural enemies, and the Greeks, its intended slaves, enfeeble each other until one or both fall into its net. The wise and generous policy of England would have consisted in establishing the independence of Greece, and in maintaining it both against Russia and the Turk—but when was the oppressor generous and just."

He could not forsee the tangled strains of events that led to the short lived Anglo-Franco-Russian agreement and the Battle of Navarino.

THE DRAMA is modelled on Aeschylus' *Persae,* but whereas the latter could conclude with a resounding Greek victory over the Persians, Shelley seems to imply that the Turks would crush the Greek revolt. Unlike so many of his earlier works, this one contains no propagandistic caricatures or oversimplification. Sultan Mahmud is no mere bloodthirsty tyrant but a true tragic figure. Shelley does however slip up on his Arabic—perhaps because of the exigencies of the pentameter:

> *The mingled battle-cry—ha! hear I not*
> *"En toutoi nike" "Allah-illa-Allah"?*

He put another premature prediction in the mouth of the ghost of Mehmet the Conqueror: "Islam must fall."

The Greek revolt will be crushed but the peoples of Europe—of France, of Germany, of Spain—will liberate themselves and then Greece. And in his beautiful choruses Shelley soars above the present to an idealised, Platonic world.

> *The world's great age begins anew*
> *The golden years return . . .*
>
> *And Greece, which was dead, is arisen!*

But the chorus ends on a tired, despairing note:

> *The world is weary of its past*
> *Oh might it die or rest at last.*

And that, perhaps, is how every study of the Near East, with its blood-soaked historical burdens, should end.

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Books Encountered

Centuries of Female Days: Englishwomen's Private Diaries. By HARRIET BLODGETT. Alan Sutton, £14.95.

Sympathetic, revealing, and touching study of diaries and diarists from Margaret Hoby (1599) to Myrtle Wright (1945), and taking in not only Virginia Woolf, Katherine Mansfield, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and George Eliot, but also many less-known. Pain and repression, fashion and gossip, slow liberation.

A History of Parliament: The Middle Ages. By RONALD BUTT. Constable, £30.00.

"The history of Parliament is seamless", writes the author; and his chronological narrative, interspersed with *tours d'horizon* and a score of apt illustrations, makes an excellent case and an engrossing read. Specialists may quibble at a slightly teleological, modern viewpoint: but the basic scholarship stands.

Willie: The Life of W. Somerset Maugham. By ROBERT CALDER. Heinemann, £15.00.

A sympathetic corrective to Ted Morgan's cool portrait in *Maugham* (1980), using notably testimony from the late Alan Searle, and shedding new light on Gerald Haxton and on the sad, senile last years. Professor Calder, already author of a critical study, cannot quote Maugham's letters: the Royal Literary Fund, his executor, insists on thus respecting his will.

Retreat into the Mind: Victorian Poetry and the Rise of Psychiatry. By EKBERT FAAS. Princeton University Press, $34.50.

In the 19th century, English poetry began to explore the psyche in ways contemporaries recognised as new. Wordsworth and Coleridge pioneered what Arnold, Tennyson, and Browning continued. Professor Faas painstakingly documents this, and reactions to it, with reference to simultaneous psychiatric work. Fascinating.

Fire Down Below. By WILLIAM GOLDING. Faber, £11.95.

Triumphant conclusion of the trilogy begun in *Rites of Passage* and continued in *Close Quarters*. The old ship labours on towards Sydney Cove; the young Edmund Talbot painfully matures, made a man by the sea like the hero of *Captains Courageous*. As always, solid detail, creaking and drenching, roots the allegory in brilliantly recreated historic life.

European Diary 1977-1981. By ROY JENKINS. Collins, £25.00.

Ignore the newspaper extracts: this diary is neither pompous nor name-showering, but Boswellian in its sly use of self-deprecating humour and shrewd character-analysis. The quotidian trivia serve too, fleshing out the effort of being (very successfully) the Community's Pope, all influence but virtually no formal power. Not a bad record—to launch the EMS *and* the new Centre Party in a few short years.

Writing and the Holocaust. Edited by BEREL LANG. Holmes & Meier, $45.00, paper $19.95.

Seventeen essays (including one by George Steiner from ENCOUNTER), mostly delivered as papers to a 1987 conference at the State University of New York. Contributors include Irving Howe, Saul Friedländer, and Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie. Most, notably Terrence Des Près on "Holocaust *Laughter*?", embody deep unease.

Flaubert: A Biography. By HERBERT LOTTMAN. Methuen, £17.95.

The brilliant biographer of Camus turns a less virgin furrow here; but recent discoveries (of manuscripts) and publications (two out of an eventual four volumes of unexpurgated letters) make the enterprise rewarding. Dr Lottman even has a kind word for Sartre's massive rumination, despite its "flawed research".

Stephen Leacock: Humour and Humanity. By GERALD LYNCH. McGill-Queen's University Press, £19.95.

Long overdue serious study of a serious man, whose *Literary Lapses* and *Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town* appeared in his forties but with a young man's sparkle. The author, who teaches English at the University of Ottawa, shows how the humour sprang from what he calls a "tory-humanist centre" in this teacher of Economics and Political Science.

Parliament at Work. By OONAGH MCDONALD. Methuen, £12.95.

Invaluable ordinary reader's guide by an ex-MP to its byzantine subject, answering such innocent (or Socratic) questions as "Why does the House sit so late?" "What do MPs do all day long?" and "What is a three-line whip?" Any prospective parliamentary candidate should read it—and probably switch to arbitrage or brain surgery.

Aspects of Verdi. By GEORGE MARTIN. Robson Books, £14.95.

Delightful ramble round its melodic hero, including nine previously unpublished letters, two ditto early works, a useful checklist of operas (with sources, first casts, theatres, and dates of *premières*), and more than a score of apposite illustrations and maps. A good accompaniment to Martin's main Verdi book.

Forbidden Land: The Struggle for Access to Mountain and Moorland. By TOM STEPHENSON. Edited by ANN HOLT. Manchester University Press, £15.95, paper £6.95.

Originally entitled *The Right to Roam* (slogan of the Ramblers Association), the late Tom Stephenson's MS, meticulously edited by Ann Holt, recounts the long and still unfinished campaign to give walkers the right to enter uncultivated land. His memorials are the National Parks and the Pennine Way. Next, what about Scotland?

Selected Letters, 1880-1935. By ARTHUR SYMONS. Edited by KARL BECKSON and JOHN M. MUNRO. Macmillan, £35.00.

Ninetyish literary journalist, "decadent" poet, and interpreter for Britain of the French Symbolist movement, Symons was a friend of Havelock Ellis and a correspondent of Joyce, Yeats, Conrad, Verlaine, Gosse, Hardy, and Augustus John. Most of the letters are previously unpublished: all show immense industry.

Cape Cod. By HENRY D. THOREAU. Edited by JOSEPH J. MOLDENHAUER. Princeton University Press, $33.50.

A further immaculate volume in this fine critical edition of Thoreau's works. Based on visits between 1849 and 1857 (i.e., spanning *Walden*, 1854), these texts were still undergoing revision when Thoreau died in 1862. Professor Moldenhauer has collated the MSS and added 200 pages of notes, etc. Classically vivid and practical, like *Walden* itself.

Margaret of York, Duchess of Burgundy 1446-1503. By CHRISTINE WEIGHTMAN. Alan Sutton/St Martin's Press, £14.95.

Sister of Richard III and wife of Charles the Bold, last Valois Duke of Burgundy, Margaret helped keep alive the British-Burgundian axis and to preserve and patronise an illustrious independent court. The author's researches are thorough, her illustrations copious and apt. Only the page format, wide and wordy, jars.

American Authors and the Literary Marketplace since 1900. By JAMES L. W. WEST III. University of Pennsylvania Press, $31.95, £19.95.

Ostensibly of most interest to authors, this is an absorbing account of the mechanics and economics of American writing: Authorship, Publishing, Distribution, The Editor, The Agent, The Magazine Market, Subsidiary Rights, Blockbusters. "American publishing houses did not always employ editors", we learn. Those were the days.

R.M.

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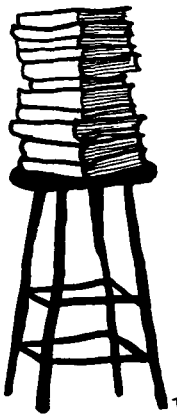
PHILOSOPHY

From Heidegger to Burckhardt

Karl Löwith's Pilgrimage—By E. B. GREENWOOD



THE CONTINUING CONTROVERSY which over the past years has been occasioned by "the Heidegger affair"—what exactly was Heidegger's relation to Nazism?—reached a new intensity with the rediscovery in 1987 of the wartime writings of a literary critic and theorist who was one of the foremost protagonists of Deconstructionism. A follower of Heidegger, the late Paul de Man had in his early twenties, in Nazi-Occupied Belgium, published in two collaborationist newspapers—*Le Soir* and *Het Vlaamsche Land*—a series of articles which have been construed as anti-Semitic.[1] He was later to become Professor of Literature at the universities of Cornell, Johns Hopkins, and Yale.

Feelings run hot on both sides. (It has, indeed, been argued that an attack on de Man is an attack on the theory of Deconstructionism.) In a discussion of these matters which appeared last year in *The Times Literary Supplement*, Tzvetan Todorov, declaring that "it is far from irrelevant to examine the moral behaviour of a specialist in moral philosophy, or the political attitudes of a political philosopher", praised as "a true philosopher [who] pays particular attention to the political implications of philosophical ideas" the now somewhat neglected thinker Karl Löwith, best known for his study *From Hegel to Nietzsche* (published in English in 1964, in German in 1941).[2] Todorov singled out for particular mention Löwith's autobiographical memoir *Mein Leben in Deutschland vor und nach 1933*. Published in Stuttgart in 1986, it also contains an appended *curriculum vitae* from 1959, which is in itself a brief intellectual autobiography.

A sympathetic introduction by Reinhard Koselleck, dated March 1986, relates how the book was occasioned by Harvard University's offer of a prize for an eyewitness account of experiences in the Germany of that time. Löwith did not win the prize (perhaps because his memoir contained too many philosophical considerations), but some vivid portraits and reflections were the outcome of the challenge. In the afterword by Ada Löwith, Karl Löwith's widow, she tells us that the memoir had been lost, but that she found it, happily preserved, when she was going through her husband's papers after his death in 1973.

In 1919, following his war service and a period in Munich—where he attended Max Weber's famous lecture "Knowledge as a Vocation"—Löwith went to Freiburg to study with Edmund Husserl. By 1925 he had followed his other teacher, Martin Heidegger, to the University of Marburg, where in 1928 (the year in which Heidegger returned to Freiburg) he himself began to give lectures on philosophy. As a Jew, Löwith could not continue teaching in Germany after 1933, but fortunately he was awarded a Rockefeller Foundation grant for study in Rome, and Heidegger visited him there in 1936. (On p. 57 of the memoir, Löwith says that quite evidently it never crossed Heidegger's mind that it was out of place to wear the National Socialist badge on his coat when they were together.) In October that year, Löwith left Italy to teach at the University of Sendai in Japan. By 1941 he was in the United States, but in 1953 he returned to Germany—to Heidelberg, where he worked until his death twenty years later.

REINHARD KOSELLECK SEES the social themes of *Mein Leben in Deutschland vor und nach 1933* as the decline of the German bourgeoisie (fuelled by the terrible inflation of 1922) and Löwith's discovery of the enforced split between the German and Jewish parts of his being. The intellectual path which Löwith charts led him via considerations of Hegel, Marx and Nietzsche to a recognition of the wisdom of the Swiss historian Jacob Burckhardt. The memoir shows how Löwith's experiences connect with his thoughts about Nietzsche and Burckhardt, and, a little more fully, with his rejection of Heidegger's somewhat neo-Nietzschean historical pragmatism.

There is much more in the memoir about Nietzsche than about Burckhardt. Enlivening and quickening impressions came to Löwith early from Nietzsche, while a sense of Burckhardt's worth and sanity seems to have arrived, appropriately enough, with growing maturity. After a graphic account of his World War I experiences and his wound received on the Italian front (he makes an almost Tolstoyan

[1] *Wartime Journalism: 1939-1943*. By PAUL DE MAN. Edited by WERNER HAMACHER, NEIL HERTZ, and THOMAS KEENAN. University of Nebraska Press, $35.00, £28.00; paper $15.95, £12.75.

[2] Tzvetan Todorov's article appeared in *The Times Literary Supplement* of 17-23 June 1988, as a companion piece to J. Hillis Miller's equally interesting defence of de Man, and John Sturrock's brief discussion of Jacques Derrida's "Paul de Man's War" (*Critical Inquiry*, Spring 1988).

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contrast between the reality of the War and the varied and inaccurate reporting of it), Löwith has a section entitled *"Nietzsche vor und nach Hitler"*. In it he relates that (usually during the Protestant scripture lesson) he and a school friend had read *Also Sprach Zarathustra* with great devotion.

His friend had spent a pre-War summer on the Ligurian coast where the first part of *Zarathustra* had been composed. He sent Löwith letters in which he described moonlit nights among the Ligurian mountains, when he lived through the moods of *Zarathustra* with what Löwith calls "the pure earnestness of an awakening German young man".

A self-portrait of his friend from 1913 shows a face directed straight at the onlooker, and, gripped in front of a naked breast, the hilt of a sword: on the crosspiece of the handle are printed the words "Love and Will". (The only parallel to such intensity that one can think of in English would be a scene from a novel like D. H. Lawrence's *Women in Love*.) Löwith writes:

> "When I look at [the portrait] again today, the historical coherence with the German present becomes evident: every illustrated paper now shows us such German faces: hardened to rigidity, tight-lipped and stretched mask-like to the bounds of the human. . . . Whoever knows Nietzsche's meaning for Germany will find the bridge which spans the gulf between the before and after without difficulty. It is impossible to understand German development without this last German philosopher. His influence was and is boundless within the frontiers of Germany. The Anglo-Saxon world, even Italy and France themselves with D'Annunzio and Gide, is incapable of grasping this influence—what attracts the Germans about Nietzsche is so fundamentally strange to them. He is, like Luther, a specifically German phenomenon, radical and fatal."

In the *Curriculum Vitae*, Löwith tells us that he had been presented with a choice between following Heidegger to Marburg or joining the Stefan George circle, with its gifted Jewish members such as Friedrich Gundolf and Karl Wolfskehl. A whole section of the memoir is devoted to *"Der Kreis um Stefan George und die Ideologie des Nationalsozialismus"*. Löwith discerned in the circle's hatred of "bloodless intellect", the life-deifying paganism, and the sense of a special affinity between the Greek and German intellect a kind of noble counterpart to the vulgarised version of these matters current in Nazism. He particularly rebukes a Jewish associate of the circle for exalting the activist Nietzsche above the contemplative Burckhardt:

> "Edgar Salin, whom I visited on the occasion of a lecture in Basel shortly after the Nazi takeover, continued to mock little Switzerland, to which he was indebted for the security of his in no way heroic existence. He had not the slightest inhibitions, even after Hitler, about vaunting his connections with prominent party members in Berlin. The study in which, after a due period of waiting, he received me with measured dignity, was furnished in grandiose Renaissance style. Busts of Dante and Goethe and framed sayings of Napoleon served to give the setting an appropriate atmosphere. In 1938 I received from him his new book on Burckhardt and Nietzsche. It is written *in majorem gloriam* Nietzsche. . . ."

Löwith, in 1936, had published his study *Jakob Burckhardt*, in which he emphasised the sanity of Burckhardt as opposed to the waywardness of Nietzsche. Salin had, evidently, inverted this judgment.

IN HIS ARTICLE in *The Times Literary Supplement*, Tzvetan Todorov refers to Löwith's memoir in the context of both the new controversy about Paul de Man and the old controversy about Heidegger.[3] Löwith found elements in common between Heidegger and Nietzsche: rejection of "objectivity" where the will is concerned, yea-saying to the hardness of fate, and rejection of enjoyment. In "The Self-Assertion of the German University"—the notorious Rectoral Address to the University of Freiburg given on 27 May 1933—Heidegger, says Löwith, denied the liberal form of freedom and submitted to "the spiritual orders of his people".[4] For his concluding words, Heidegger had violently wrenched a phrase from Plato's *Republic* into the German *"Alles Grosse steht im Sturm"*. Karsten Harris translates the German as "All that is great stands in the storm".[5] In a footnote Harris gives Benjamin Jowett's translation of the passage:

> "What is there remaining?"
> "The question of how the study of philosophy may be so ordered as not to be the ruin of the State: All great attempts are attended with risk; 'hard is the good, as men say.'"

Compare this with Francis Cornford's translation:

> ". . . and the hardest part is still to come."
> "What is that?"
> "The question of how a state can take in hand the pursuit of philosophy without disaster; for all great attempts are hazardous, and the proverb is only too true, that what is worth while is never easy."

Löwith is therefore quite right when he speaks of Heidegger's making his German rendering of Plato sound *"stürmisch"*, calculated to make a young *SS* man see the community of teachers and students as one of struggle, in which truth is bound up with feeling *(Gemüt)* and heart *(Mut)*, in which Being *(Dasein)* does not find its enemy, but has to shape it. This led not to a Greek *agon* or struggle, but to a stupid and empty levelling-out of excellence, in which the best were forced into silence and the majority became accustomed to "doublespeech" *("eine doppelte Sprache")*. Löwith says that, compared with the countless pamphlets which appeared at the time, Heidegger's address is to the highest degree

[3] The Heidegger controversy has been reopened by the recent publication of Victor Farias's *Heidegger et le Nazisme* (Editions Verdier, 1987), and is further surveyed in Hugo Ott's thorough and carefully documented *Martin Heidegger: Unterwegs zu Seiner Biographie* (Campus Verlag, Frankfurt/New York, 1988).

[4] See in ENCOUNTER, September-October 1985, Dolf Sternberger's "The Grand Delusion of Dr Heidegger".

[5] Karsten Harris's translation appeared in *Review of Metaphysics*, vol. 38 (1984-85), pp. 470-480.

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philosophical and responsible, a small masterpiece of form and composition. However, Löwith saw an ambiguity as to how far the account of history found in section 74 of the second part of Heidegger's 1928 work, *Being and Time* ("The Basic Constitution of Historicality"), could be related to the political situation in 1933:

> "Labour service and armed service become one with knowledge service, so that at the end of the speech we do not know whether we should take Diels's *The Presocratics* into our hands, or march with the *SA*. We can judge the speech neither as pure politics nor as pure philosophy."

Heidegger's address, says Löwith, begins with a contradiction. It defends the autonomy of the university against the state, but at the same time, by sanctioning an unconditional capitulation to a National Socialist scheme of leadership and obedience, denies the "liberal" autonomy of the individual. The rector as leader is seen by Heidegger as himself led by "the spiritual task of his people", but what defines that task remains vague. In the end, the task is a fate which at the same time we take it upon ourselves to will, following the example of Prometheus, the figure whom the Greeks regarded as the first philosopher. The youngest strength of the people has already decided the issue: "All that is great stands in the storm."

LÖWITH ALSO GIVES an account of an ontological analysis of death by Heidegger, as reported in the *Freiburger Studentenzeitung* for 1 June 1933. The sense of the radical separateness of one's own death, which five years earlier Heidegger had linked (in a note to Section 51 of the second part of *Being and Time*) with Tolstoy's *The Death of Ivan Ilych*, was now linked with the peculiarly patriotic example of the death of a Black Forest German—Albert Leo Schlageter—who in 1923 had been shot for carrying out sabotage in the French occupied zone. Schlageter, according to Löwith, was spoken of by Heidegger as having a will that had its source in the ancient rocks of the *Heimat* (homeland); Löwith, however, sees him as one of the young "Germans thrown off the rails by the war, such as E. Von Salomon portrayed in his novel *Die Stadt*", who were given over to a "decisionism" which could lead them either to Communism or to Nationalism.

Löwith also tells us that the *Freiburger Studentenzeitung* for 3 November 1933 reported Heidegger calling on the student body to affirm Hitler's position as future German "actuality and law". Löwith continues (pp. 39-40):

> "In Heidegger's lecture theatre there was 'philosophising with a hammer' just as Nietzsche had done previously in the *Twilight of the Idols*, but without the splendour of his psychological sharpness. And while Nietzsche proved himself by remaining the opponent of Bismarck's Reich, the 'lofty and free' decision of Heidegger's philosophy as rector is of such a kind as gave the brute fact of the happenings in Germany the elevated name of Fate."

Karsten Harris, its translator, has drawn attention to the fact that nowhere in Heidegger's Rectoral Address did he use the *words* "National Socialism", "the *Führer*", "Chancellor of the Reich", or "Hitler". But Löwith (who only claims such a direct allusion in the Address reported in the *Freiburger Studentenzeitung* of 3 November) was surely right to suggest that in its historical context the earlier Rectoral Address can legitimately be seen as contributing to the atmosphere which enabled National Socialism to take hold on minds encouraged to reject a "not genuine" and "only negative" academic freedom.

Of one thing Löwith acquits Heidegger: the race and Jewish questions played no role in his thinking and writing, and because of this he was an object of suspicion to the petty-bourgeois Nazi Party orthodoxy. The thought of the Jewish philosophers Bergson, Simmel, and Husserl had played too great a role in his intellectual formation for Heidegger to turn his back on them, and Bergson and Simmel were studied by Löwith with him in his seminars. Löwith sees Heidegger as, like Ernst Jünger, a solitary thinker on the edge of the Nazi movement, but not without a positive effect on its promotion.

THIS RAISES THE QUESTION of a perennial and more general theme: the contrast between Burckhardtian contemplation and Nietzschean activism. Heidegger follows what one might call the historical pragmatism of Nietzsche's "On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life", the second of his *Untimely Meditations* (1874): history is vindicated as having a use only in so far as it is caught up on some wave of the future. For Löwith, no philosopher had harnessed philosophy to the decisive demands of the time as much as Heidegger. In this respect Heidegger's philosophy is enmeshed in the theme which Nietzsche broadly characterised as "nihilism"—a will to destruction. It is this will to destruction which Löwith sees as the key to understanding the influence exercised by Heidegger's own philosophy.

The problem was beautifully stated by Nietzsche in the opening of the third essay of *The Genealogy of Morals* (1887):

> "The fact that the ascetic ideal can mean so many things to man is indicative of a basic trait of the human will, its fear of the void. Our will requires an aim; it would sooner have the void for purpose than be void of purpose."

As Löwith says in his *Curriculum Vitae*, the young Marx's wish to transform philosophy by putting it into the service of revolutionary change was in fact the negation of philosophy:

> "Whoever would like to change the world, whoever will have it as other than it is, has not even begun to philosophise and has mistaken world history for the world and a human construction for human history."

There is a curious coincidence here with Wittgenstein's remark in *Philosophical Investigations* (I, 124), that philosophy "leaves everything as it is".

Löwith also sees that the central element in Heidegger's "productive deconstruction" *("produktiven Abbau")* of traditional metaphysics lies in the rejection of the Greek sense that

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only that which is ever present as an essence is true.[6] Heidegger replaces such a present presence, a *nunc stans*, with the pull of the future. (Presumably this prepared the way for Jacques Derrida's preoccupation with the rejection of "presence".)

REINHART KOSELLECK sees in *Mein Leben in Deutschland vor und nach 1933* the autobiographical genesis of Löwith's 1953 critique, *Heidegger: Denker in durftiger Zeit*. Two aspects of this work deserve comment: first, Löwith's rejection of Heidegger's interpretation of the famous "God is dead" passage from *The Gay Science*; and, secondly, the way he criticises Heidegger's historical pragmatism.

In Section Three of his critique—*"Die Auslegung des Ungesagten in Nietzsche's Wort 'Gott ist tot'"* ("The Interpretation of the Unsaid in Nietzsche's saying 'God is dead'")—Löwith sees Heidegger's interpretative method as the complete antithesis of Dilthey's. Dilthey wanted to discover an author's meaning, while Heidegger is concerned to understand a work by means of whatever purpose seems most enticing to the interpreter in terms of possibilities for the future—a sort of pragmatist hermeneutics which anticipates Deconstructionist interpretation. Löwith sees Heidegger as oddly aligning Nietzsche with such figures as Aristotle, Leibniz, Schelling and Hegel: as a metaphysician, therefore, rather than, as would be more appropriate, a highly individual and untraditional thinker such as Kierkegaard.

Moreover, like the depth-psychologist, Heidegger is more interested in what is unsaid than in what is said, so he can deploy the tricky *argumentum a privativo* or *argumentum a silentio*—often so difficult to refute, and yet at the same time so dubious. Thus Heidegger interprets "God is dead" as referring to the end of the two-world metaphysics of Western Platonism, the material world and the real world of ideas—an interpretation which makes Nietzsche Heidegger's ally in the destruction of such metaphysics.

Löwith takes the view that any candid reader, open to what Nietzsche has to say and to his way of saying it, will see that Nietzsche, first and last, was seeking not theoretical knowledge in the Greek sense of metaphysics, but salvation. Nietzsche certainly rejects Plato's metaphysical world of ideas, but when he says "God is dead" he is also rejecting the Creator God of the Old Testament and the Saviour God of the New. In fact Nietzsche is not simply undermining the church Christianity of the 19th century, which Kierkegaard also attacked, but the real thing—the gospel of Jesus and the preaching of Paul.

Nor does Nietzsche postulate a "metaphysic of values". When he speaks of value, he means what he says in aphorism 715 of *The Will to Power*: the standpoint from which we choose what we find enhancing within the universal flux of becoming. Nietzsche is not a clear thinker like Aristotle, but a passionate and confused one. It is obvious, however, that life as the will to power is not a value for Nietzsche (and cannot itself be subject to valuation), but is rather the living and natural ground on which value may rise. Both God *and* any supersensual world have disappeared for a mankind which can recognise that its "I will" has replaced any objectively given "Thou shalt".

IN SECTION TWO of his work on Heidegger, *"Geschichte, Geschichtlichkeit und Seinsgeschick"* ("History, Historicality and the Fate of Being"), Löwith sees Heidegger as rooted in a metaphysical historicism which links him with Hegel. Where Hegel sees the past as having pointed forward constructively, Heidegger looks backward destructively. Heidegger tries to overcome historical relativism by rooting the historical in a *Dasein* which is not *in* historical time, but contains historical time within itself.

Löwith thinks that Heidegger has crossed Hegel's historical sense with Kierkegaard's emphasis on the moment. But Heidegger's orientation to death and "the end" cannot make possible a normal understanding of history, for death is bound to the natural world, not to the historical world. It was, moreover, Heidegger's concern with the moment which delivered him up to the demands of the time. Unlike, say, the theologian Karl Barth, he had no philosophical measure above the temporal.

HEIDEGGER'S CAPITULATION to "the now" could just as easily have sanctioned a commitment to Marxism as to Nazism. In short, unlike Nietzsche and Burckhardt, he was not capable of being what Nietzsche called *unzeitgemäss* (untimely, i.e. unconditioned by the demands of the time). Nietzsche and Burckhardt, in their different ways, had emancipated themselves from historicism. Heidegger, on the contrary, incorporated historicism into his absolutising of Being: his thought was deeply embedded within Christian eschatology—a mode alien to the classical mode of thought with its recurring types of character and situation. Christian eschatology made possible what Löwith calls "historical futurism".

Both Nietzsche and Burckhardt admired Thucydides, and adopted a classical and "tragic" mode of thought. But Nietzsche in the second of his *Untimely Meditations* for the most part rejected the historical notion "that happiness lies behind the hill . . . that the meaning of existence will come more and more to light in the course of its process".[7] Nevertheless, Nietzsche slipped into a mode of historical pragmatism akin to Heidegger's, in that he rejected history as a form of autonomous knowledge.

Nietzsche saw the historical view as justified only when caught up in the service of the flow of a powerful stream of life. And this is exactly what Heidegger does in his Rectoral Address. On the other hand Burckhardt, more faithful to Schopenhauer, and so vindicated against Nietzsche in Löwith's *Jakob Burckhardt*, valued historical reflection as one way of achieving the knowledge of the blindness of the

[6] *Mein Leben* . . . , p. 147. Löwith writes of the Freiburg student years of 1919-22 as a period which was uncomparably rich and fruitful, the source of all that his generation lived off spiritually.

[7] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Untimely Meditations*, trans. Hollingdale, with an introduction by J. P. Stern (Cambridge, 1983), p. 65.

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will which is the only redemption possible to spirit. As Burckhardt wrote in the Introduction to his *Reflections on History*:

> "The mind must transmute into a possesssion the remembrance of its passage through the ages of the world. What was once joy and sorrow must now become knowledge, as it must in the life of the individual.
>
> Therewith the saying *Historia vitae magistra* (History is the guide of life) takes on a higher, yet humbler sense. We wish experience to make us, not shrewder (for next time), but wiser (for ever)."[8]

IT IS NOT SURPRISING that a man with so acute an historical consciousness as Löwith—who so clearly expresses the notion that it is not the task of the philosopher to change the world, and that to have such an ambition is to negate philosophy—should be criticised by the modern *doyen* of theoretical activism, Jürgen Habermas.

Habermas has made it his task to destroy the notion of disinterestedness. In an article dated 1963, republished twenty years later in his collection of essays *Philosophico-Political Profiles*,[9] he attacked Löwith for having effected what the article's title sums up as a "Stoic Retreat from Historical Consciousness". It seems that Löwith did not care to give himself up to what Habermas sees as the demands of the time—namely, the abolition of war and of capital punishment. Harbermas thinks that a concern with "change in the organisation of dominance and the exercise of violence" is the current categorical imperative for the philosopher. The unsatisfactory way (to Habermas) in which Löwith contributed to a radio series on the abolition of the death penalty is used to stigmatise the worth of a whole complex *oeuvre*. Löwith's "overcoming of historical consciousness" is perversely and quite unjustifiably aligned with "Heidegger's pretentious 'overcoming' of metaphysical thought". But the two simply have nothing in common, and I have shown how Löwith demonstrates that Heidegger's overriding concern to overcome metaphysics led him to interpretative distortions of Nietzsche.

Perhaps, in the end, it is a matter of the way in which temperament connects with the perennial problem of the active versus the contemplative. Habermas cites from the *Curriculum Vitae* Löwith's laconic account of being driven by the revolutionary unrest of Munich in 1919 to go and study in Freiburg with Edmund Husserl, as though Löwith was self-evidently in the wrong:

> "Distancing oneself from *pragmata* (objects of practical concern) in pure contemplation is no longer objectively as possible as it was in the days of, and under the circumstances of, Heraclitus or even Aristotle."

Why not? Surely this is question-begging dogmatism. It is a matter of judgment, not just a given, as to whether an object *is* one of practical concern, and then as to whether it should be of practical concern to the judge.

Strangely, given his views, Habermas omits to quote Löwith's praise of the way in which, at a time when everyone was agitated by the French Occupation, Husserl calmly concerned himself with philosophic work—as if nothing in the world should distract the man with a scientific vocation from the seriousness of scientific research. Perhaps a few readers will feel that both Löwith and Husserl chose "the better part". Such readers belong, like those two philosophers, to the truly "happy few".

[8] Jacob Burckhardt, *Force and Freedom: Reflections on History* (ed. Nichols, Boston, 1943), p. 86.

[9] See Jurgen Habermas, *Philosophico-Political Profiles* (trans. Lawrence, 1983), pp. 88, 85, 95.

The Geographer

Little man
wasted in a chair;
a head upon wheels
whose dwarfed body
gave no support for ideas.
And yet he talked
in commanding tones
and frail hands gave decided point.
"The body is not the mind", he said.
"Nor the mind the soul."
Transcending grotesque form
he reached a lighter air
and danced with feet untwisted
while around, the people laughed,
not at, but with this little man,
strapped helpless in his chair
creating archipelagoes of friendship.

Catherine Gill

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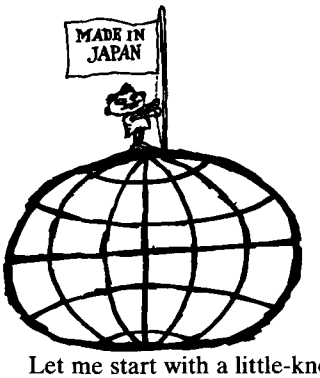
EAST & WEST

Letter from Japan

Twenty Years On

By Herbert Passin



I WANT TO LOOK BACK on the last two decades from the point of view of those two economic giants, America and Japan. During that time the US-Japan relationship has changed dramatically. Japan has grown larger, the United States smaller, and the fundamental structure of world order has altered.

Let me start with a little-known statistic. In the mid-1960s, the Japanese Ministry of Education had for the second time since the end of World War II to order a change in the size of seats and desks in schoolrooms. The post-War generation had grown so much in physical stature that schoolchildren could no longer fit comfortably in the seats. Since the Meiji period (when records on stature were first kept because of military conscription), the average stature of Japanese males had increased by about four inches. Three-quarters of that increase had taken place in the post-War period.

In the decades since, there has been another dramatic rise, with the average of high-school seniors touching 5 ft 7 inches. A walk down a crowded Ginza street or through a subway station provides convincing evidence of how much the new generation of Japanese, both boys and girls, has outgrown its parents. While the Japanese of even twenty years ago literally had to look up to the citizens of the advanced industrial societies, this is much less the case today. Most Japanese of the post-War generations are able to look most foreigners straight in the eye.

A related statistic symbolic of the change is the great increase in life expectancy. At the end of World War II, average life expectancy in Japan (apart from the immediate effects of the War) was just under 50 years. In this respect, as in many others, Japan was in the position of a mid-developing nation. Today, Japan has the highest life expectancy of any country in the world. A few years ago, Japanese women passed the 80-year mark, overtaking Iceland (until then in first place). Then Japanese males passed the 75-year mark (again taking first place from Iceland). Height and life expectancy are perhaps not directly related to economic growth and status. They are, however, symbolic of the change in Japan's position in the world.

In the mid-1960s it was common for close observers of the US-Japan relationship to use the analogy of two countries looking at each other through the opposite ends of a telescope. To the Japanese, the United States was an enormous presence filling almost all of the lens space; to the Americans, Japan was a small spot on the lens of US global responsibilities. This was quite natural. The US economy was about five times the size of Japan's, and its per capita GNP was 2.5 times larger.

By 1977, Japan had come within hailing distance of the United States, its GNP about 40% of US GNP, and its per capita GNP about 80% of the US figure. The views from the opposite ends of the telescope were no longer so different, as far as size was concerned. For both sides the adjustment was hard; many Japanese still preferred to act small, and many Americans preferred to act big.

In the twelve years since then, the relationship has changed even more. The US GNP is now about twice Japan's, which means that per capita GNP is about the same. One may argue about the details of exchange rates and purchasing power, but these numbers give a fair idea of how far the relative economic weight of the two countries has changed.

With the recovery of the war-damaged countries and the economic growth of some of the Third World countries, it was only to be expected that the relative position of the United States, despite its not inconsiderable growth, would decline from its immediate post-War 50% of world GNP to 22% by 1980. During this same period, Japan rose from its negligible post-War share to about 4% in 1967, and to 10% by 1980. With currency devaluation, these numbers have come closer together. The United States remains the most powerful single country in the world, but no longer on all indicators and no longer as overwhelmingly dominant as before.

HOW MUCH the two countries have changed in themselves and in their relative positions may be seen in other ways as well. In 1967, the United States was already well on its way towards "post-industrial" status, while Japan still had one-fourth of its labour force in agriculture, though down from 49% at the end of World War II. In the past 20 years, the US agricultural labour force has dropped to the 2-3% level and Japan's to about 8%. Even this figure is somewhat exaggerated. In the mid-1960s, 58% of all Japan's farm families could be construed as full-time farmers deriving the major part of their income from farming. At the present time, full-time farm families account for less than one-fourth of agricultural employees, that is, about 2% of the total labour force. It has been calculated that the Japanese Agricultural Cooperative Association has more employees than there are full-time farmers.

Japan's industrial and employment patterns are clearly evolving in the same direction as those of the United States and other advanced industrial societies, but about a generation or two behind. In all countries, the disappearance of agriculture—which means the disappearance of farm villages as well—causes fears that the bastions of national culture are being eroded. In the USA, the rapid change took place in the

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1920s and '30s. The shocks and trauma are now largely past, although the recent crisis in American agriculture has stirred up some older memories. In Japan, however, this process started in the early 1960s. Rural Japan is still a living part of historical memory. Most people have either lived on a farm or have relatives who did so, and in many cases still do. In 1967, this was even more marked.

THE HISTORICAL MEMORY of an older generation just two decades ago was different in other important ways from that of present-day Japanese. World War II was still very much part of the experience and thinking of most Japanese and Americans. An American observer described the Japanese student-movement leaders he met as virtually all having the war-time experience as a vivid memory: burned homes, evacuation, the dispersal of families, the death of friends and relatives, and bombings. In 1967 (as I wrote several years later), "the aura of World War II winner-and-loser still clung to the relationship. . . . This generated resentment and the beginnings of a nationalistic reaction. . . ."

Although there are still many who have gone through these experiences, these earlier attitudes have disappeared. The notion of Japan as a defeated country and the United States as "the conqueror" is no longer in the forefront of people's minds when the two sides meet.

In 1967, Japan's education ranked well below American standards (although well above European), with just over 50% in the appropriate age category in senior high school and only about 15% going on to university. Today, Japan outranks the United States at the secondary-school level; with about 38% of the age group in higher education, it is comparable to the United States. At pre-university level, the Japanese educational system outperforms its American counterpart, although at the university and graduate school level the USA is on average still far in the lead.

The exact way in which education and its expansion feed into the growth process is a complex issue. Education not only provides cognitive skills that are useful for economic development, it also forms attitudes and expectations that exert complex effects on the economic system, labour-management relations, social mobility, class structure, and consumer demand. Education also has much to do with the capacity of the economy to adapt to new challenges and demands, and to acquire new skills. More widely, we may see it as contributing to the emergence of Japanese forms of individualism (what the playwright and social commentator Masakazu Yamazaki calls "soft" individualism) and of self-assertiveness.

By 1967, Japan had, for the first time in the post-War period, come to have a trade surplus with the United States. Within a few years, the surplus had grown to become the single largest issue, both political and economic, between the two countries. This trend, if on a lesser scale, has developed in Japan's relations with virtually all of the other industrial countries of the world. At that time, Japan's overseas investments were negligible. Today, they are rising at a dramatic rate, on the verge of overtaking the American, and are becoming a major factor in world markets. The concern now is not whether Japan will invest overseas but whether "over-investment" in some areas—highly visible (and sometimes symbolic) real estate, for example—may not stir a feeling of threat, as began to happen in Honolulu's Waikiki in the early 1970s. At the same time, the USA has become a debtor country, increasingly dependent for its deficit funding on Japanese purchase of US Government issues. Japan is now the leading creditor nation in the world.

An important concomitant of Japan's growth and outward movement has been a rapidly rising level of internationalisation. In 1969, there were several million Americans living abroad in connection with US military commitments, overseas business, and study. American tourism ran into the millions. Japan, however, had only a very modest overseas presence. But today 600,000 Japanese are overseas residents, and the number of Japanese overseas tourists has increased from about 400,000 per year to over 7 million. These numbers are likely to continue to increase rapidly.

Japan is in the process of transformation from its traditional isolated insularity into much more openness than ever before to the new currents at work in the world. Historically, much of Japan's contact with the outside world was through books, or otherwise from a distance—movies, visual images, news reports. Now, direct contact plays an increasingly important role. The Japanese language has been a handicap for direct contact, but today enormous amounts of attention and investment are devoted to learning foreign languages, particularly English.

Marxism, two decades ago, was still a major force within Japan's political and intellectual life. Since the late 1920s and early 1930s, it had been deeply entrenched. In the early post-World War II period it was strong in the Left-wing opposition parties and in the trade union movement. Japan's largest union, the Teachers Union, was dominated by Left-wing Marxists. Marxist influences were also strong in literature, in publishing, in academic life, in the school system, in the press, and in many academic fields (history, economics).

IN THE PAST twenty years Marxist influence has declined to an extraordinary degree. Disenchantment with the Soviet Union, whether as a model for the ideal society or as "the workers' paradise", could not be more complete. And the romantic attraction of "revolutionary China" has also faded away in the light of the Chinese reality and the Sino-Soviet split with its conflicting demands on the faithful for loyalty. Although Marxism remains alive in a few areas, often unconsciously entrenched in the language of thought, it has virtually disappeared from view in many of the fields where it was once a vigorous force.

Even in the Japan Socialist Party where, unlike the case of the European socialist parties, Marxism had been dominant, it has receded from the mainstream to one of the anti-leadership factions. The "retreat from Marxism" is even more dramatic in the trade unions, where (on the whole) it now takes the shape of occasional formal rhetoric rather than being a serious source of ideas.

The Japan of the 1960s was strongly centralised. Its provinces were in the process of rapidly losing population to Tokyo and a few other large metropolises. All the major decisions affecting the country were made in the centre, and the

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Pay Now, Buy Later

Tokyo

PERHAPS ONLY *the Japanese, who financed an economic miracle through their devotion to saving money, could have devised and embraced the latest rage here: the anti-credit card.*

While US shoppers pile up credit-card debts to worry about after Christmas, Japanese consumers are turning to "pre-paid cards"—thin, magnetically encoded plastic cards that give customers the privilege of paying now and enjoying later.

The boom in pre-paid cards, which come in thousands of designs, began with pay telephones, where their convenience quickly assured their popularity. But now or in the near future, customers will be able to "pre-buy" cigarettes, taxi rides, groceries, pinball games and even Japan's most popular hamburger, the Big Mac.

The cards are becoming so popular that the Finance Ministry has set up a task force to study whether they are in danger of replacing money—and if so, what should be done about it. According to Paul R. Heaton of W.I. Carr, a merchant bank, the market for pre-paid cards will expand to about one trillion yen (about $8 billion) within a few years.

THE POPULARITY **of the cards, which amount to a huge interest-free loan from customers to the corporations involved, mystifies many non-Japanese. "In the US and the UK we're on a credit-card boom, and here they're on a reverse-credit-card boom," said Richard Jerram, an economist for Kleinwort Benson International in Tokyo. "It's quite incredible, isn't it?"**

Credit cards are only now catching on in Japan, where the lack of crime allows consumers to carry large wads of cash. But pre-paid telephone cards, which Nippon Telegraph & Telephone Corp. introduced in 1982, quickly became popular. The cards, thinner than credit cards, can be purchased in denominations from 500 to 5,000 yen ($4 to $40) and used in pay telephones specially designed to read them. They are inserted into the phone before dialing and then are returned at the end of the call with the face value reduced according to the length of the conversation.

THE FAD-CONSCIOUS *Japanese embraced the cards with an unusual fervor. They quickly discovered that the cards made ideal gifts, always a plus in this gift-addicted society. Salesmen hand them out instead of calling cards; companies send them in return for answering surveys, and politicians print their photos on them and pass them along to voters.*

In addition, the Japanese soon turned the cards into new canvases for their artistic skills. Cards were illustrated with old woodblock prints, views of beautiful scenery or teen-age idols in the singing and acting world.

Card-collecting clubs sprang up, and some stores now deal in rare or vintage cards. Telephone-card collectors are said to number in the hundreds of thousands—many of them buying and holding cards without ever using them, to the delight of the telephone company.

AFTER SELLING **nine million cards in 1984, NTT sold 60 million in 1985, 149 million in 1986 and 228 million in 1987, for a total of more than $2 billion, according to Mr Heaton. "The cash comes in first, and even if the customer loses the card, it's not the company's responsibility", a foreign telephone-company executive said. "It's ideal."**

Fred Hiatt
in THE INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE

dependent provinces did as best they could. This was as true of the arts, culture, and intellectual life as of economic and political activity.

In the 1970s, a new trend began to show itself—an attempt to revitalise the provinces. In part this resulted from the semi-paralysis of the centre, where the conservative-opposition balance frequently approached stalemate; in part from the awareness in the provinces of the extent of devitalisation. The rapid growth of the centre had encouraged a Back-to-the-Provinces movement among people who had gone to the big cities and found the life there unsatisfactory.

In the meantime, however, despite efforts to decentralise Tokyo, it continues to grow. The Greater Tokyo area within a radius of 60 kilometres contains over 20 million people and the majority of the economic, political, educational, scientific, cultural, and media activities of the country. The concern now is whether its growth will extend to a 300-kilometre radius. In such a case, Greater Tokyo will contain about 30% of the country's population, over 70% of its economic activity, and even higher proportions of everything else. It remains to be seen if the provinces will succeed in maintaining their vitality despite the expanding reach of the Tokyo leviathan.

FOR THE USA the last twenty years have been very different. In 1967, Lyndon Johnson was President, having won an overwhelming victory in 1964. The American engagement in Viet Nam was approaching its climax, and President Johnson's fortunes were sliding rapidly downhill.

Domestically, the United States was beset by the Civil Rights movement, the growing opposition to the war in Viet Nam, and the stirrings among the students that led into the 1968-69 rebellions on campuses. All three of these movements became intertwined in the climactic events that led to President Johnson's decision not to run for re-election in 1968. At the same time, the US economy started to head toward serious inflation and governmental fiscal crisis.

In 1967 in Japan the Japanese student rebellion was moving toward its climax in tandem with the American and the European student movements. It is curious how similar the movements often came to look in spite of the differences in the national situations from which they emerged. In a world of modern communications technology, they also interacted closely with each other, passing ideas, slogans, and tactics back and forth. Opposition to US involvement in Viet Nam soon emerged as a popular and convenient common issue.

For the USA, the Viet Nam War marked a turning-point in its international position. Its relative weight in the world at large, as well as in Asia, declined. Soviet military power grew and, in the Pacific, Soviet naval power was soon altering the Asian balance of power. At the same time, the familiar bi-polar world of the earlier post-War period began to give way to a much more diversified, multi-polar world.

Despite the fact that the worst defeat for the USA took place in Asia, its greatest diplomatic successes were also there. The situation in the Middle East worsened with the oil crisis and the emergence of OPEC, and the US position in Europe weakened visibly. In Asia, however, its position improved: Sino-American relations became a major force of

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strength and stability, and the ASEAN alliance has become a force for stabilisation and growth. Despite the relative decline of US power and the rise of Soviet military strength, all of the friends of the United States in Asia have done reasonably well (although the situation of the Philippines is still not clear). The decline of American "hegemony", if such it was, has not been as harmful as had once been feared.

Japan was becoming one of the new powers, but very reluctantly. Proud as their country's growing power was bound to make Japanese feel, most leaders would have preferred to avoid its obligations. The predominant attitude in recent years, despite some attrition, has been one that prefers to avoid commitment, to keep on the good side of everybody, and to dodge difficult decisions. The Japanese mainstream continues to place more emphasis on trade and economic relations than on defence and alliances. They would have preferred that Japan had become big and powerful without anyone noticing. These positions become harder to sustain as international pressures mount for Japan to "do more"—become more "committed", "open up", provide more assistance.

The pride the Japanese take in their progress and growing recognition throughout the world appears inevitable. The question now is whether this pride, legitimate though it may be, will not go too far and turn into arrogance. Modern Japan has a long tradition of looking up to "superior" nations and looking down on "inferiors". In practice, this has meant deference towards Americans and Western Europeans, and arrogance towards Koreans and South-east Asians. The Japanese attitude towards China has always been ambivalent.

Now that Japan has "caught up", and in many respects even surpassed Western nations in key aspects of national performance (except for military power), many people, including even some Japanese, worry that this may release dangerous nationalistic sentiments. Continued external pressure and "scapegoating" by other countries, as many Japanese perceive it, may strengthen this tendency. Are the traditional Japanese concepts of "hierarchical world order" still alive, or have they altered as a result of her years of experience? Will Japan continue to be perceived in the outside world as arrogant, self-serving, and lacking in generosity? The answers to these questions are not yet clear.

In the light of the changes that have taken place within the two societies and in the structure of world power, it is instructive to contrast the issues that were salient in the 1960s with those we confront today.

The United States-Japan Mutual Security Treaty, ratified in Japan in the face of enormous popular opposition in 1960, could be terminated on one year's notice by either side after 1970. In 1967, the Japanese were anticipating public pressure to terminate the Treaty after 1970. Much of the discussion involved ways in which these pressures might be defused—a possible treaty revision, reduction in the American presence or "over-presence" in Japan, and restrictions on the use of American bases (particularly in connection with Viet Nam).

These preoccupations seem very remote today, although the US military presence continues to cause isolated tensions; for example, in some local conflict between a base and its adjacent community, the crash of an American plane, the expansion of base or housing facilities, or protests over noise from night flights or manoeuvres. In the event, however, 1970 passed quietly and the Treaty continued in force without serious challenge.

More important for Prime Minister Eisaku Sato in 1967 was the problem of Okinawa. Okinawa was then under direct American military rule, and there was no clear commitment on its return, except for the US recognition of Japan's "residual sovereignty". It virtually dominated the bilateral discussions of that year as the most explosive issue in the relationship. By 1969, it was even more of an issue because the Treaty review was scheduled to take place in less than a year, and conferences were punctuated by meetings with Okinawan delegations, reporters, and experts. By 1970, it was all over.

The principal economic issue between the two countries in 1967, apart from a growing feeling of threat in the United States about Japan's rapid expansion and a corresponding anxiety in Japan about US protectionism, was the textile problem. It had became so tense that it was often described as "a war". As the comparative advantage in textiles shifted to the less-developed economies, textiles soon disappeared as an issue between the two countries. Both began to feel the same kind of heat from Asia's "newly industrialised countries"—South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore.

Althought the language of conflict often remains surprisingly similar—"trade war . . . crisis . . . protectionism . . . closed markets"—the specific items at issue have changed. Sectorial conflict has involved a succession of products—steel, consumer electronics, autos, and new high-tech such as semiconductors. Unchanged are US demands for increased Japanese market-opening or import of specific products (beef, citrus fruits, coal). In one sense, the intensity of the dispute has risen dramatically; in another sense, the kinds of friction remain depressingly familiar.

IN THE PAST twenty years, the United States has become relatively weaker, and Japan stronger. The interdependence and interaction between the two countries has grown by large orders of magnitude. The United States is turning more and more to the Pacific, where its relations with Japan are less competitive than complementary. For Japan, the US market remains critical, despite the reduced proportion it represents of Japan's overall trade. Its investment in the United States, production in the United States, and purchase of government bonds are also critical. They are equally critical for the United States.

The late Herman Kahn once likened Japan and the United States to "two elephants thundering side by side down the same narrow path". They were bound constantly to bump into each other and occasionally to jostle one another off the path. Because of their size, bumps and collisions could cause great harm. The essential problem for the future was how to manage this joint thundering down the same narrow pathway—this race, if race it be—with the minimum of damage.

Today, the problem remains the same—only the elephants have become larger and more elephants have joined the race.

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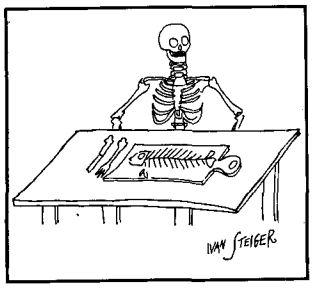
ECONOMICS

Africa's Man-Made Crisis

By Leo Katzen



AFRICA'S ECONOMIC CRISIS has been dramatically in the news in recent years, with drought and famine in Ethiopia and other countries. The primary export-oriented economies of sub-Saharan Africa have also been hard hit by the world recession of 1979-83, which has contributed to the external debt problems that many of them share with other Third World countries. But Africa's problems are not primarily to do with bad weather, poor resources, or other external factors beyond governmental control (such as adverse terms of trade in world commodity markets). Essentially her problems have been man-made—by bad governments in the post-Colonial period. The problems are long-term, multi-sectoral, and self-reinforcing over several decades.

Government policy inadequacies have been manifest in at least three critical areas.

1. A consistent bias against agriculture in most sub-Saharan African countries—with low producer prices, high taxation of farmers, and neglect in resource allocation.

2. Trade and exchange-rate policies which have over-protected inefficient import-substituting industry and harmed agriculture by raising the cost of agricultural inputs; and over-valued exchange rates which have adversely affected agricultural exports by contributing to low producer export prices.

3. A widespread neglect of manpower constraints—with consequent poor administration, and lack of decision-making and planning capacity in the context of an over-extended public sector.

In brief, there has been wholesale neglect of market forces, while systems of distorted administrative prices have been conducted by an unduly large and inefficient state apparatus.

To demonstrate the crucial importance of domestic government policies, I shall contrast what has been going on in a few of the six or so relatively good performers in the region (like Ivory Coast, Kenya, and Malawi) with some of the poor performers (like Ghana and Tanzania). All faced similar external factors, and similar handicaps, if any, of climate, resources, and history.

Not all of the 45 countries of the region regarded as sub-Saharan Africa (this excludes the Republic of South Africa) have performed badly. A few of the mineral-rich countries—like oil-exporting Gabon and Nigeria, and diamond- and copper-exporting Botswana—did well, at least in the 1970s. A few agricultural primary product exporters—Ivory Coast, Kenya, Malawi—also did relatively well in that period. But the overall picture is one of dismal performance, with consequent balance-of-payments problems and debt crises.

In the period 1960-80, 19 countries had a GNP per-capita growth rate of less than 1% per annum. In the 1970s things were worse than in the 1960s: 15 countries experienced a negative growth rate of income per head—in the case of Ghana, the worst performer, income fell by a startling average of 1.9% per annum over the period 1965-84.

Nowhere is the economic crisis more evident than in the performance of agriculture and agricultural exports. Overall agricultural production in the region increased by only 1.3% per annum in the 1970s—against a population growth rate of 2.7%. Only 8 countries in the whole region had an increase in output-per-head over this period. This is reflected in food production which, with an average increase of only 1.5% per annum in the 1970s, was well below population increase: food deficits had to be met by rising levels of food grain imports.[1] Production of export cash-crops fared even worse—the 20% increase in output of the 1960s was cancelled by a similar decrease during the 1970s.

Africa's share in world trade for her traditional exports declined in this period, thus contributing to recurrent balance-of-payments crises and rising debt. Taking Ghana again as an example, the production of cocoa—her main crop—fell from 450,000 tons per annum in the early 1960s to less than 200,000 tons in the early 1980s. As a result, her share of world output fell from ⅓ to ⅙, and her leading role was overtaken by relatively new producers like Brazil and Malaysia. For a region where in most countries 70 to 90% of the population are still engaged in agriculture, this has meant a large fall in real income and an increase in poverty for the vast majority.

LET US LOOK AT the three factors commonly advanced to explain the causes of this malaise: poor resources; bad weather; and adverse terms of trade.

Apart from a few relatively densely populated areas like the Kikuyu region in Kenya's Highlands, African countries are not characterised by land shortage. Contrast this with countries like Bangladesh and India, where the prime cause of real poverty is lack of access to land and the presence of a large landless labouring class. While it is true that African soils and

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[1] See *Accelerated Development in sub-Saharan Africa—An Agenda for Action* (World Bank, Washington D.C., 1981), ch. 1.

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climate are not currently conducive to highly productive intensive agriculture, the question still remains as to why official resources and scientific knowledge have not been adequately brought to bear in dealing with such natural handicaps as exist. Why has "the Green Revolution", which has been such a success story in other parts of the developing world, not come to Africa?

Nor is bad weather the main cause of the problem. Low and erratic rainfall is certainly endemic in the Sahelian region of West Africa, parts of the Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, Kenya, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, and Botswana. But erratic rainfall cannot explain the steady erosion of Africa's capacity to feed itself. Her food crisis, which has been building up for at least two decades, results from an alarming deterioration in production together with a rapid increase in population. The region has become increasingly dependent on rising commercial food imports and food aid.[2]

A third factor commonly put forward by bodies like the Organisation of African Unity to explain Africa's poor performance blames adverse movements of Net Barter Terms of Trade (NBTT)—the ratio of export prices to import prices. It is true that for some sub-Saharan African countries the terms of trade have moved adversely over the period 1960-81, and particularly so in the early 1980s. But more important is whether countries respond to these movements in prices by a reciprocal adjustment of volumes. Here the relevant index is Income Terms of Trade (ITT), the ratio of export earnings to import prices. Where a country controls imports, a fall in NBTT may still be accompanied by a rise in ITT, in which case the fall in export prices has been compensated by a rising volume of exports.

Take Ghana and Ivory Coast—next-door neighbours, with similar resources. Both suffered a fall in NBTT in the period 1960-81; the index of 100 in 1960 stood in 1981 at 66 for the Ivory Coast and 62 for Ghana.[3] But whereas Ghana's ITT in 1981 stood at only 71, the Ivory Coast's was 332. It had peaked at 529 in 1977, but even at the lower rate greatly compensated for falling prices.

The contrast between Kenya and Malawi on the one hand and Tanzania on the other is equally striking. In Tanzania's case, her 1981 NBTT at 106 was actually above the 1960 level, and had been for most of the period. Yet her ITT fell to 66 in 1981 and had been steadily falling since 1977, reflecting an absolute decline in export production. Both Malawi and Kenya had much less favourable terms of trade than Tanzania. Yet throughout the 1970s Malawi's ITT was at least double its 1960 level, reaching 239 in 1981 with NBTT of only 65. In Kenya, too, ITT in the 1970s remained above the 1960s level, in spite of a fall in NBTT. Indeed, in 1977 Kenya's ITT rose to 248. Unlike Tanzania, she took advantage of the surge in coffee prices that year to expand output dramatically by some 20%; in Tanzania, coffee output in 1977 was still below 1975 levels.

The cause of this difference in performance is to be found primarily in the contrasting pricing policies followed by governments in these countries. In Ghana, the real producer-price of cocoa fell by 75% in the 1970s, while the percentage of world price received by farmers fell from 57% in 1966 (cocoa farmers were already heavily taxed in the 1960s) to a mere 15% in 1978-79. (In the Ivory Coast, on the other hand, the real producer-price of cocoa in the 1970s rose by 13%.) In Tanzania, the fall in real producer-prices of export crops in the 1970s was also massive—58% for coffee, 78% for tea, 57% for tobacco and so on.[4]

It is a long-established fact, well documented by Russian experience of the "Scissors Crisis" in the 1920s, that peasants—and African peasants are no exception—are responsive to the movement of prices. If peasants are paid low prices for certain products, they will switch to those that are more profitable, or where possible engage in smuggling. When all prices for their products are low, and the goods they wish to buy are very expensive or unobtainable, they quite rationally revert to subsistence production for their own consumption and produce little for the market.

A vicious circle is at work. With low production, exports decline; imports are then reduced, and even basic necessities (which depend in whole or in part on imported inputs) become scarce, which further discourages production. Recent evidence from Tanzania, where peasants find it difficult to get basic necessities like candles, soap, matches, and kerosene, confirms this cycle.[5] During World War II, Britain appreciated the important role of basic consumer goods as an incentive to peasants in her colonies to maintain the production of essential items like groundnuts which were needed to feed the British population. In spite of severe shortages and rationing, scarce British resources were devoted to making textiles and other goods for sale in countries like Ghana and Nigeria.[6]

No sub-Saharan African economy has had quite so disastrous a record as Ghana's over the last few decades, but many have followed similar policies with much the same result. Ghana was the first African colony to gain independence after World War II. In 1957 she had one of the highest gross domestic products per head in the region; together with relatively high rates of literacy and life expectation (by Third World standards); a healthy export trade; and some $400 million accumulated in sterling balances as a foreign reserve. She had suffered no land alienation under colonial rule, so her agriculture was characterised by large

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[2] Carl K. Eicher, "Facing up to Africa's Food Crisis", in *Africa in Economic Crisis* (ed. Ravenhill, 1986), p. 149.

[3] S. Smith and J. Sender, "Africa's Primary Commodity Exports—A Re-evaluation", paper submitted to the African Studies Association of the UK Conference, Canterbury, September 1986, Table 2, p. 3.

[4] Frank Ellis reports an overall 35% decline in the price and income terms of trade of peasant crop-producers over the 1970-80 period. See his "Agricultural Price Policy in Tanzania", *World Development,* vol. 10 (1982), no. 4, pp. 263-83.

[5] In a recent study of Tanzania it was found that out of 21 items of basic goods required by peasants, on an average only 13 were available at any one time; in some villages as few as 8 were obtainable. See Paul Collier *et al., Labour and Poverty in Rural Tanzania* (1986), p. 115.

[6] See P. T. Bauer, *West African Trade* (1954), and his subsequent books, *Economic Analysis and Policy in Under-Developed Countries* (1958), *Aspects of Nigerian Development* (1974), and *Reality and Rhetoric: Studies in the Economics of Development* (1984).

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numbers of peasant smallholders who were well involved in a market economy. She had inherited a sound administrative framework, and a reasonably good social infrastructure.

Only 25 years later her economy was in tatters. The story is one of government policies generating an increasing imbalance between supply and demand in every market. I have referred to the central role played by falling agricultural output and decreased exports. In Ghana in 1980, food production was only 12% of Gross Domestic Product—compared with 28% in 1960. Gross Domestic Savings and Investment were only 5% of GDP in 1980, as against 24% and 17% respectively in 1960. In 1981, the inflation rate was 100%, and the foreign exchange rate so overvalued that by 1982 the black market rate was 50 times the official rate. Unemployment rates were high, and growing higher—and yet there was no incentive for people to stay in agriculture. The massive price distortion against peasant agriculture was accompanied by protection and expansion of inefficient, publicly-owned, manufacturing enterprises which operated at a fraction of full capacity; by investment in inefficient, large-scale state farms; by wasteful infrastructure expenditure; and by an over-expanded state bureaucracy.

Recently there has been some improvement in Ghana's economy, following pressures put upon her to change her policies by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Devaluation of the currency, higher prices to farmers, and the dismantling of some controls, together with an attempt to combat corruption have led to an increase in output and an improved export performance. But it will take many years to overcome the damage done by past policies.

In Kenya, by contrast, African farmers began the period of independence in a much more unfavourable position, with large-scale land alienation and restrictions imposed by the previous settler-régime on African production of coffee, tea, and livestock. The new government not only removed these restrictions but put the emphasis on incentives for smallholder agriculture and on getting prices right. On the whole, Kenya's post-Independence growth record has been quite good, in spite of the problems brought about by her very high population growth rate and her dependence on imported sources of energy.

Malawi is another case of a country which started independence at a very low level of income but where appropriate government policies have achieved not only a good growth of agriculture based on smallholdings (4.5% per annum over the period 1968-77), but an even faster growth of industry (6.5% per annum over the same period, although starting from a low level). This result was helped by the kind of industry which was encouraged—processing of agricultural products, and simple, labour-intensive manufacturing like footwear, clothing, and metal-working. Firm wage policies kept industrial wages from moving out of line with agricultural earnings, as they had in many other African countries. Protective tariffs were maintained at a relatively low level of between 7½% and 40%. Malawi's foreign exchange rate was kept in line with world price levels, and there were no quantitative import controls. Although half her industrial enterprises were parastatals (publicly owned industrial enterprises which, like nationalised industries, are meant to have a modicum of freedom of action, but in practice usually do not), they were free from government interference, and foreign enterprises were encouraged.

The crucial importance of using market forces, or at least of getting administered prices right and thereby avoiding price distortion, has been highlighted in a World Bank study by Ramgopal Agarwala.[7] In a survey of some 31 developing countries worldwide, he finds a strong negative correlation between growth and price distortion. Malawi, Ivory Coast, and Kenya come out well (along with the more familiar success stories of South Korea and Malaysia), with low price distortion and high growth. At the other extreme are, again, Ghana and Tanzania.

In Africa, at least, all the socialist economies did badly. (Many economies which were not avowedly socialist also did badly, but for much the same reasons as the socialist countries.) The few economies that did relatively well gave much more freedom to market forces. There were none which were *laissez-faire*—all were interventionist to some extent—but at least they got prices more or less right.

BEFORE THE WAR, the famous Polish economist Oskar Lange put forward a blueprint for Market Socialism in his essay "On the Economic Theory of Socialism".[8] His aim was an economic system closer to the general equilibrium of a perfectly competitive capitalist system than he thought was likely to be achieved under any *actual* advanced capitalist system in the inter-War world.

Lange recognised the efficiency of a market system in allocating resources. With decentralised sources of information, no participant in the system need know very much beyond his own utility function and production possibilities in the face of the prices of what he buys and sells. The simplicity of this system was made possible because markets were assumed to supply "information" in the form of prices that were responsive to changes in supply and demand. But this allocative efficiency need not be restricted to a private property system; it could be adapted to one in which the means of production were state-owned, with enterprises and individuals responding to market forces rather than being controlled by a central planning agency. Lange went further in believing that a socialist system on the lines he suggested was needed to overcome the endemic market failure of advanced capitalist economies where monopolies distorted the free working of markets and prices. Needless to say, "the Lange model" was not the one adopted by the centrally planned socialist systems that exist today, although there is some move now to reform them along these lines.

Theorists like Oskar Lange thought that market failure was the key factor that justified a change to socialism in advanced capitalist economies. They believed, however, that this did not apply to the underdeveloped economies of the world, where there was little monopoly and most people were involved in producing the basic necessities of life. With a weak

[7] Ramgopal Agarwala, *Price Distortions and Growth in Developing Countries*, World Bank Staff Working Papers, no. 575 (The World Bank, Washington D.C., 1983).

[8] Oskar Lange, "On the Economic Theory of Socialism", *Review of Economic Studies*, October 1936.

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data base and manpower constraints, any system that depended on the increased role of government would be even less likely to succeed. *Government failure* rather than market failure was much more likely to be the case in these circumstances.

Yet "Development Economics" in the post-War world of the 1940s and 1950s became dominated by structuralists like Gunnar Myrdal, Raoul Prebisch, Arthur Lewis, and Ragnar Nurkse, who believed that supply-and-demand in underdeveloped economies was unresponsive to prices. Government, they said, should therefore manage quantities and arbitrarily fix prices. It was assumed that governments could not only find out what the social optimum was for their societies, but would also act on it. This led to a great faith in the virtues of physical planning, with the direction of resources to strategies like "Import-Substituting Industrialisation" to overcome an assumed dependency of developing countries who were on declining terms of trade in their primary product trade with advanced countries.

Even true social choice (as against choices made by the market) must depend in the end on efficient and uncorrupt administration by people whose lives are dedicated to implementing values chosen by others. Experience has shown that, especially where there are weak data and inadequate administrative capacity, plans have given poorer signals than markets as to the real state of the economy. The evidence given by Peter Bauer and others on the vigour and importance of markets in West Africa and elsewhere, and on the dangers of letting Marketing Boards fix prices, has for long been ignored. There is now, however, a much greater consensus in both East and West—and indeed in North and South—that the informational and allocative efficiency of markets and the price system is an essential ingredient of economic and social progress.

In All Things

Singing *Teach me my God*
And King, you swept
The same room over and over
For his laws,

For the God of brooms
And dusters who shall see
Himself in the polished table
Face to face.

Prayer was the breath
Which misted silver
As you buffed it up
Then saw him shine

Or when he answered
In excelsis
From the firmament
Of thrumming wires.

Bent at the fireplace
Which we named your altar
With its two brass candle-sticks
And marbled clock

Oh the bone in my leg
You muttered, rising,
I'd rather wear out, though,
Than rust out

And you did, a home help
Humming the Beatles
Paid by the hour
To sweep around your feet.

John Mole

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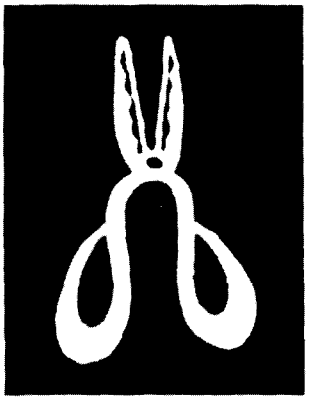
FILM

The World of Dreams, the World of Things

By Paul Coates



TO COUPLE the two words "Ozu" and "politics" may well seem simply provocative. Western reception of that "most Japanese of directors" has generally deemed him formally radical (as David Bordwell has shown, he consistently violates the Hollywood 180° rule[1]) but indifferent to social and political issues. Ozu Yasujirō's repeated use of the same actors and situations (one thinks, for instance, of the omnipresence of Chishu Ryu from the 1930s onwards) has conspired with the general unavailability of many of his works to prompt most Western critics to collapse the majority of them into a single prototype; they fail to perceive the development of his career or the differences in quality between the films. Those who *have* discerned a development (e.g. Noël Burch[2]) describe it in purely formal terms—lamenting a waning radicalism in the editing or a decrease in the number of still-life inserts which Burch terms "pillow shots". But they pay no attention to possible shifts in content or attitude.

As with the films of other great Japanese directors, many of Ozu's pre-War works have disappeared; the negatives have been lost, or were not preserved in the first place. And of course there are Ozu works which have never been distributed in the West.

A noticeable feature of several of the extant Ozu films of the 1930s is their use of comic films or performances to punctuate the films themselves. *I Was Born, But . . .* (1932) includes a home movie of a father pulling grotesque faces to amuse his boss, much to the embarrassment of his two young sons. *A Story of Floating Weeds* (1934) presents a theatrical performance that fizzles out because the boy playing the dog misses his cue and then rain starts to leak through the roof. And in *The Only Son* (1936) the son takes his mother to a German *Heimatfilm*, recommending it to her as a talkie as she falls asleep. (It's clear what Ozu thinks of the new form, whose adoption he postponed for as long as possible.) In each case the inserted performance is ludicrous: the other world of art offers the frustrated characters no transcendence—it is as failure-ridden as their own lives.

Ozu's films thus document the impossibility of escape: the alternative world of performance merely mirrors this world, and offers no real alternative.

All the films from this period are about the excruciating stasis of Japanese society, with shame-tormented fathers dreaming of greatness for their sons, who themselves feel shame because of their inability to match paternal expectations. Afraid to admit failure, they avoid contact (including eye-contact) with their parents; they move away; they even cease to write letters home: the protagonist of *The Only Son* has married and had a child himself without ever informing the mother whose sacrifices made his education possible.

Japanese society is frozen into the form of changelessness; frequent passing trains are not so much a sign of change as the surburban substitute for nature. Interjected shots of objects in these films have various functions, but the most important is that of tactfully looking away from the human tragedies.[3] Such shots are far more significant in the '30s films than in the post-War ones—where they are usually fewer in number, shorter, and glossed over by the banal music with which they are overlaid. (Many of the '30s films are silent.) The director saves the face of his characters by concentrating on objects instead of on human suffering, and the resultant mood is one of stoical impassivity, an antidote to anthropomorphism. These inserts are true still lives: the horizontals and verticals of telegraph poles and lines of washing recall Mondrian; the shots of everyday utensils, Morandi.

Things are to be envied, for they have no ambitions and are simply themselves. To be like them, contentedly immobile, is an ideal which none of the frustrated protagonists can achieve. The shots containing things alone show sets prepared for the arrival of people who do not yet exist. The world of human dreams and the world of things coexist with one another, running in parallel; they never intersect.

In the later Ozu, however, the subjective and the objective begin to converge in a manner that is both stifling and strangely Utopian. The camera's increasing immobility is part of a passive resistance to growing up. The *tatami*-mat-level perspective is that of the child who always looks upwards: in the utopia of changelessness, adults are simply absurdly

[1] See, for instance, Bordwell's *Ozu and the Poetics of Cinema* (British Film Institute and Princeton University Press, 1988) or "Space and Narrative in the Films of Ozu" (written jointly with Kristin Thompson), *Screen*, vol. 17, no. 2, pp. 41-73.

[2] Burch's *To the Distant Observer* (Scolar Press, 1979) was the first theoretically ambitious attempt to describe Japanese cinema in book form in English. Burch sees Ozu's work as subject to ossification after 1942—which must be premature, given the appearance of *Late Spring* in 1949. His book is marred by its tendency to define the Japanese as the ideal Other of Western culture—thus replicating the Western critical stereotypes which it is its stated intention to destroy.

[3] The presence of these "pillow-shots" can also be read as a sign of homage to the dead, who figure frequently in Japanese cinema but not at all in Ozu's works. Impersonal shots of empty rooms, landscapes and townscapes can be seen as moments of obeisance to the world of the Gods, the invisible ancestors, and the Other in general. Paying homage to the Other ensures that it stays in its place. Such ritualised moments of reverence show the Other that it has not been forgotten. Mollified, it then allows the narrative to proceed undisrupted.

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overgrown children. This intense resistance to change is focused in *Late Spring* (1949) in the figure of Noriko (the traditionalist characters in later films, who are played by Setsuko Hara and are sometimes also called Noriko).

Noriko's eventual resignation to the inevitability of change, in the form of marriage, is expressed in the long look she directs at a vase towards the end of *Late Spring*: herself about to be given away, she can feel that empathy with the object which Walter Benjamin (letter to T. W. Adorno, 9 December, 1938) described as an empathy with exchange value. Simply an object in her father's hands, she awaits her exchange impassively. A sign of the relationship between monetary and marital exchange, the vase is like Henry James's golden bowl.

Two important features of the film indicate the depth of Ozu's sympathy with the traditionalist daughter who resists change and has no wish to leave her father. Her long look at the vase resembles his own filmic habit of staring at objects, trying to grasp the secret of their calm. What is more, he never shows us an image of her prospective husband: Ozu has no more desire to know about him than she does. (Could he, like her, be jealous?)

Late Spring is a sublime film—the finest Ozu work I have seen. Noriko is forced to undergo the realisation that her self-sacrifice—her readiness to remain unmarried in order to care for her father—is not wanted; she then has to learn that it has all been a form of egoism, an understandable unwillingness to give up a relationship in which she is happy. She realises that the father who matters so much to her will not be completely happy unless her future is secured before he dies. To facilitate the break, he tells her he intends to remarry. Noriko's violent jealousy of the supposed new spouse is rendered all the more poignant by her efforts not to express it. The fact that the father's talk of his remarriage is simply a ruse shows him to be as self-sacrificing as his daughter, as well as preserving him from what she sees as the indecency of taking a second wife. He tells her that even if she is not happy at first in her marriage, happiness will come (as it did to her mother) if she works for it.

THE PRICE WHICH *Late Spring* pays for sublimity is deliberate oblivion of class realities. Gone are the *lumpen* or lower-middle-class characters of the '30s films, with their frustrated aspirations. Instead there is exclusive focus on a middle class (the father is a university professor) whose lack of material worries allows it—and Ozu himself—to concentrate upon relationships. The sublimation of the question of money is also an attenuation of reality and style; again the analogy is with the late Henry James. (The formalists' elevation of the late Ozu is surely motivated by reasons similar to those that underlie the academic apotheosis of the late James.) Here the emphasis is less on men and their blocked ambitions than on exemplarily self-effacing young women. Noriko's resistance to change is clearly part of the film's opposition to the Americanisation present in the English signs, the references to Gary Cooper, or the independence of her divorced girl-friend. Ozu's identification with her points to his own helplessness.

The very first shots of *The Autumn of the Kohayagawa family* (1961), Ozu's penultimate film, demonstrate the triumph of the new reality—a neon sign announces, in English: NEW JAPAN. Ozu's alienation from the brave new commercial world lends the film its strange, dissociated tone; it cannot find its bearings. The possibility of deliberate opposition to this new order is defused by its dispersal among three sisters (Aiko, Fumiko, and Noriko) whose appearances are intermittent, and who do not in any case voice criticism of the older generation's narrow materialism. After their father's death his sister may odiously remark that dying was the proper reward for his sinful ways, but before anyone can criticise her (assuming anyone has a mind to do so) she breaks into tears, in which she is joined immediately by Fumiko, who had persistently teased her father for his visits to an old flame.

SINCE NO single character provides a focus for the spirit of criticism that floats across the film, Ozu himself is forced to make the point with melodramatic exaggeration when the daughter of the father's former love regrets that the old man did not live long enough to fulfil his promise of a mink stole. Such heavy-handedness is symptomatic of the depressing half-heartedness of the film. Ozu seems to care little for any of the characters. The father may be a positive figure, but his joviality is one-dimensional. The moment we begin to feel something for him, following his unexpected stroke, he jumps to his feet, surprising both us and the family. We may resolve not to be fooled so easily again, either by him or by the film.

The most sympathetic of the sisters is Noriko; after her father's first stroke we see a shot of her from behind, silhouetted against the window, frozen in grief (it is the finest shot in the film). Yet in the end she decides to marry the man she loves, not the man her father had proposed. The arranged marriage would have rescued her father's brewing firm from its financial difficulties, but after his death she feels no compulsion to follow his wishes.

Disconcertingly finicky in its rhythms, continually stopping and starting a series of sub-plots, the film seems absent-minded. Its comedy is tired: the recurrent shots from inside a house of someone bustling past in the street become automatic and irritating after a while. And the film leaves an obscurely bitter aftertaste. A peasant and his wife, working by a riverside, notice crows in the vicinity. The woman remarks that someone must have died. The man disagrees: after all, no smoke is rising from the crematorium chimney. There is no directorial criticism of the obtuse sense of fulfilment they feel when, later, they see the smoke ascending. We are invited to savour the peaceful rightness of a scene that has nothing right about it at all.

In *The Autumn of the Kohayagawa Family*, political quietism slides into total, numbed alienation. No effective opposition to the commercialism of modern Japan can be foreseen, and so the film tries to aestheticise what it execrates. The half-heartedness with which the world is represented implies that it is no longer worthy of representation. Is that why we are supposed to view with satisfaction the smoke which shows that a man has died? Is it also why Ozu's tombstone bears the Japanese character for "nothing"?

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THEATRE

Good Titles, Better Plays?

By Malcolm Rutherford

"I LIKE good titles for my plays", Sean O'Casey once said. And in *Juno and the Paycock* he certainly had one. Whether he has still is another question.

The production of *Juno* at the National Theatre has not gone down very well with the critics; nor—so far as I can gather—with most of my friends who have seen it. There have been criticisms of the set for being too bare and using only part of the Lyttleton stage, and of the accents for slipping. More than one person has asked: "What is a paycock anyway?"

Since I watched some of the same people enjoy and admire Arthur Miller's *Two-Way Mirror* at the Young Vic, where the accents slipped even more, some sort of cultural change must be going on. The plays which made up the Miller double bill seemed to me to have no discernible merit whatever. One assumes that they were appreciated because they were part of a canon of works by a dramatist who has sometimes written well: it is hard to believe that they would have been praised if they had been by an unknown author.

Evidently, no such allowances are made nowadays for O'Casey. Nor should they be. For it is not as if *Juno and the Paycock* is one of his lesser plays; it is one of his best. If you do not like *Juno*, you will probably not think much of the rest of them. And the fact is that, by and large, audiences did not think much of the National Theatre production.

This is a serious matter because the National is preparing to put on the two other O'Casey plays which, with *Juno*, make up almost a trilogy: *The Shadow of a Gunman* and *The Plough and the Stars*. If they were to go down limply as well, O'Casey's reputation would have to be reassessed, losing its alpha rating. Or perhaps one should reassess the National Theatre. Either way, there is a certain amount at stake.

To confess a personal interest: In the past few years I have spent more time trying to understand Irish affairs than going to see plays. But I remembered *Juno* and the others very well from earlier productions. I was looking forward to *Juno* because I thought it would show how little had changed; and it does. The reason why the set is so bare, one assumes, is to convey a sense of timelessness. There they were in 1922. Here we are in 1989. Perhaps the only difference is that whereas the play is set in Dublin, today it would be more appropriately located in a Catholic ghetto in Belfast, for it is in the North that the Irish Republican Army and its offshoots now find much of their support, recruits and sympathisers. That, however, is a political detail. The play still stands.

There are two possible explanations for why the present production was not better received. One is that it is played too slowly and is too full of *longueurs*, milking the last drop and so on. The other is that a British audience may have become numbed by Ireland, never understood very much what the troubles were about in the first place, and has little interest in catching up with them now. Perhaps we could take the two together.

The National Theatre production *is* played too slowly; almost patronisingly so. The characters seem like a bunch of troglodytes, when most of them are in their way rather bright. Playing it faster would bring that out. It would also demonstrate O'Casey's skills as a dramatist. He could write repartee with the best of them. And once you bring out the theatrical skills—the sheer joy of being on stage—it is no longer necessary to see *Juno* primarily as a play about Ireland and its troubles, present and prophetic. It is just a play.

O'CASEY never tired of saying that he could only write about what he saw and heard with his eyes and ears. He said that it was the same for Shakespeare, Milton, Aeschylus, Euripides, and probably Ibsen as well. There is no reason to believe that he was being pretentious. He wrote about Ireland and contemporary events because that was the place, and those were the events, that he knew. I think that it was my mistake to go back to O'Casey and expect to find a well-written tract illustrating the futility of the IRA and the Catholic Church. Those are incidentals: the background, not the substance.

In any case, it would quite wrong to attribute to O'Casey any great gift of prophecy. By the time he died in 1964 the Irish situation had become rather quiet and could have been reasonably expected so to continue. It was stirred up again in 1968 because some extremists did not like it that way. O'Casey had, long before, made his own peace with England, where he lived from 1934. Indeed, he seems to have been a remarkably tolerant man. Although nominally a Communist, he declined repeated invitations to the Soviet Union, perhaps for fear of being disillusioned, and he was not noticeably hostile to the United States, where his plays were a great success. He liked the theatre.

Possibly the National made my mistake of playing up the politics and the contemporary relevance. It is easy and tempting to do. But if one looks at the text, and remembers other productions, it is not the only way. There is more to *Juno* than guns and bullets, IRA coercion, Catholic acquiescence, idleness and drink. For a start, there is poverty. One of the most revealing lines in the play comes when Johnny, the son of the Boyle family, who has been crippled in the service of the Republicans, hears that the family may have come into

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money. His reaction is one of total relief: "We'll be able to get out of this place", referring to the not very affluent conditions around him. You could say that what he really wants is a better standard of living: a room with a bath.

Johnny is also very puritanical, very working-class male. He is as shocked and angry as his father when his sister becomes pregnant without a husband. He has no forgiveness, sympathy or understanding. Stock stuff, perhaps, of its time, but it takes one a little beyond the view of *Juno* as primarily a political play.

To stray into another work as illustration: there is a marvellous line in *Red Roses for Me*, regarded as O'Casey's most autobiographical play. Some of the workers plan to put on an entertainment—a Minstrel show—to raise money for a strike fund. An Irish purist Republican fundamentalist objects: "We want no coon or Kaffir industry in our country." The Irish can be very puritan, very prejudiced and xenophobic. O'Casey picks it up as observation: almost a comedy of manners.

IN *JUNO AND THE PAYCOCK* there is Joxer Daly and, played by Tom Hickey, he is far and away the star of the National Theatre production. He has a way of walking, of holding his arms with his elbows turned outwards and his hands turned inwards, of wearing his hat and, once, taking it off that commands attention. But note this: Joxer is not just Captain Boyle's drinking companion and sycophant. He sees through the Captain and can take him off when he wants to. Boyle talks about his days at sea:

> "Sailin' from the Gulf o' Mexico to the Antanartic Ocean . . . An', as it blowed an' blowed, I ofen looked up at the sky an' assed meself the question—what is the stars, what is the stars?"

Joxer plays along, but later does a very cruel mimic in front of the Captain, which suggests that he is not at all as dumb (in the American sense) as he pretends. Joxer O'Casey sees through everything, and finds it funny just as much as tragic.

Not least, there is the singing. O'Casey's characters are always breaking into song, and in *Juno* a whole scene is devoted to a sing-song. This is not a diversion. It is an integral part of the play: musical tragi-comedy. There were others who used the stage in a similar way, even though O'Casey would have hated to admit it, as the following illustration may show.

O'Casey looked down on Noël Coward, even the young, earnest Coward who was full of social conscience. He denied ever going to see *The Vortex*, the Coward play about drugs that I discussed in last month's ENCOUNTER. But he admitted to having read it and was interviewed about it by Beverley Nichols, the novelist and journalist. O'Casey said: "The people in it are absolutely artificial. . . . They haven't got humanity." Nichols objected that it was simply that O'Casey had never met anyone like that. "If I did meet them", O'Casey replied, "I shouldn't listen to them when they talked like that."

And so it went on. O'Casey conducted almost a vendetta against Coward. He wrote a book about the English theatre in which Coward was singled out as the main object for attack. Harold Macmillan, the future Prime Minister, at first refused to publish it on the grounds that it might be libellous. O'Casey's version of the story is that he so pestered Macmillan that he was invited to go to his office to talk about it. Macmillan then reluctantly agreed to let the book through.

Yet, if you think about it, Coward and O'Casey had a great deal in common, apart from being contemporaries. They both loved the versatility of the stage, and both wrote about what they saw and knew. Coward was a snob. So was O'Casey: he looked down on the upper classes. Both of them had their affectations. When O'Casey came to England, he professed to being totally opposed to Oxford and public schools. Yet when it came to educating his children, his wife asked George Bernard Shaw where they should go. "Dartington Hall", he said; so there they went.

And, of course, both Coward and O'Casey had an ear for the lyric, for the nostalgic, the sentimental, the one-liner. The next O'Casey productions might do well to contain a touch of Coward. Just as we have learned that the latter could be serious, we should not forget that O'Casey could be comic. The distinction is fine: between a room with a view and a room with, or without, a bath.

On Hearing of my Mother's Death Far Away

I write poems for her memory,
count the lines,
go over words that capture
only what needs to be said;
I fail to tell the world
the bastard that I was,
how I forsook her,
how, reduced to writing poetry,
I pretend her forgiveness
as if all her suffering
were so many words,
so many acts in my head.

G. S. Sharat Chandra

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IN THE MARGIN

Kipling & Japan

By Anthony Hartley

OF ALL British writers who have dealt with the East, Kipling is certainly one of the most vivid and percipient. For amusement few can beat his descriptions. He had the style and he had the eye of the best kind of reporter. That he was a great writer, an unmatched connoisseur of human character, only makes things better. The journeys he took in 1889 and 1892, the first one of which was largely recounted in "From Sea to Sea", produced much journalism. The articles concerning Japan are now reprinted with careful editing, additional material, and introductions by Sir Hugh Cortazzi, ex-ambassador in Tokyo, and George Webb, editor of the *Kipling Journal*.[1]

Kipling and Japan, just then in the throes of the reforms and Westernisation of the Meiji era! The conjunction arouses expectations. Did he spot the country's emergence into a great power? Did he see in the Japanese the future conquerors of Russia, who were to remove once and for all the Czarist threat to the frontiers of India? One cannot say so. His impression of Japan, by and large, is certainly one of a great people—great in its dealings with silk, lacquer and stone—but which at that time seemed to lack the qualities required for imperial expansion:

> "Mercifully she has been denied the last touch of firmness in her character which would enable her to play with the whole round world. We possess that—we, the nation of the glass flower-shade, the pink worsted mat, the red and green china puppy dog, and the poisonous Brussels carpet. It is our compensation."

There is little hint in this of what was to be the future of Japan. One has the impression that Kipling was more interested in the present of his own compatriots.

But these pieces were travelogues, most of which were written for the *Allahabad Pioneer*. This had its consequences. First, as every member of that rather curious breed, the travel journalist, knows, it is necessary to amuse one's readers. On no account should deep analysis of the country visited be undertaken. Humour is the thing. So is liveliness. Both are served by Kipling's account of exchanges with his travelling companion Professor Hill, with an old Yokohama "hand", and "Griffiths, The Safe Man". Dialogue was his strong point and, in this case, enabled him to put into the other's mouth opinions on which he himself could comment. The success of the technique is unquestionable. Secondly, there is a less welcome ingredient, the Anglo-Indian jokes and comparisons, even though the notes of this edition explain them nobly. No doubt, these familiar references were much appreciated by Kipling's readers back in Allahabad—but they are not always the best glass through which to view Japan. This may well explain the rather forced parallel at the end of one of the reports:

> "Japan is the second Oriental country which has made it impossible for a strong man to govern alone. This she has done of her own free will. India, on the other hand, has been forcibly ravished by the Secretary of State and the English M.P., aided by the telegraph.
>
> Japan is luckier than India."

This suggests a deep misunderstanding of how a system of consensus works.

But how should Kipling have known? He did not go very deep into Japan—far less deep than Isabella Bird, for instance, whose peregrinations around flea-infested inns make more impressive, if less amusing, reading. Nor did he come to the country with much in the way of historical background. The limit of his knowledge seems to have been the great exclusion of foreigners under the Tokugawa shogunate. He knew that Japan had been "opened up", but as to what exactly had been "opened up" he remained vague, relying on his eye and his intuition.

STILL, intuition carries him far. If you want to encounter Kipling's descriptive powers at their best, read the relatively short passage on the great Buddha of Kamakura. The subject, of course, linked on to his Indian experience and the fascination with syncretic religion to be found in *Kim* and the Indian short stories. The article closes with a poem that is well up to standard and is quoted four times in *Kim*—Kipling's predilection for self-quotation seems to be unique in its frequency. What he writes here shows a sympathy for the world of Hindu and Buddhist religion which is free from sentimentality or perennial philosophising. His anger at Western tourists photographed standing on the statue's thumb-nail is an unfeigned reaction of pity for the huge and helpless deity: "Think for a moment of the indignity and the insult!"

Kipling's general impression of Japan was of a land with a capacity for the creation of beauty, exquisite houses, furniture, clothes and other artefacts, which was abandoning its ancient heritage for the ugliness and mediocrity of a bourgeois industrial civilisation. Time and again he contrasts the brightness and dignity of traditional Japanese dress with the dark and depressing frock-coats and trousers imported from the West. The change taking place in Japan appeared to him, not so much a reaching out towards power, as a flight from aesthetic achievement. In this he was a man of his age. Japan had so far impressed itself on the West through its paintings and its prints whose influence on the French Impressionists and Whistler had been so considerable. Against the expectations

[1] *Kipling's Japan*. Edited by HUGH CORTAZZI and GEORGE WEBB. Athlone Press, £14.95.

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aroused by the Japanese past, to see in Tokyo "every tenth man . . . attired in European clothes from hat to boots" was a shock. It was hard to resist the temptation to regard the transformation as something of a joke, despite the favourable impression produced by the diligence and discipline of the Japanese people. Although Kipling had an inkling of the potentiality of the Japanese army, he failed to see that he was assisting at the birth of a great power.

THAT SO intelligent and so great a writer should not see what was, nevertheless, before his eyes should serve as a warning to those of us who write about countries whose habits, culture and language are foreign to us. To take a minor example, a friend of mine, who served for some time as a British press attaché in Sofia, remarked that of the numerous British journalists who passed through or stayed to report on Bulgarian affairs—these latter rather scanty—not one had read even the article in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* on the country and its history. Or take a nearer example—West Germany. Undoubtedly, the understanding of European affairs in Britain is seriously damaged by the failure of newspapers and broadcasting, with one or two shining exceptions, to send to Bonn representatives who have any sense of German history or knowledge of German culture. "Dull old Germany! All motor cars and sausages!", one can hear the editors thinking. Yet it is there, more than in other European countries, that the history of Europe over the next decades will be decided, and the editors and their audiences will miss it all.

Newspapers, it is said, can no longer afford to leave *en poste* journalists who finally become expert on the country from which they report. There is no space for them, nor a budget for them, nor a taste for them among the public. More is the pity! For the old breed of foreign correspondent fulfilled a task of public enlightenment which is only being carried on today in fits and starts by universities and specialised institutes. Nor is the comprehension of foreign countries helped by the refusal of academic experts in international affairs to take into account the cultural factors in politics and their preference for the analysis of international "systems". Instead of the settled writer, gradually learning his way around a country and a culture, we have the peripatetic, globe-trotting expert, applying techniques of instant perception to countries and situations that appear increasingly similar, snapped in the black and white of "news" and "non-news". However, I suppose that the foreign correspondent as he once existed—as he still exists in, say, the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*—was a product of Victorian seriousness, old-fashioned by this time. Now we are all for liveliness. Kipling, too, was lively—far more lively than most modern reporters—but then he did not take himself too seriously, nor were his type of reports the only source of information about Japan open to the newspaper reader of the day.

THE GLOBE-TROTTER (or jet-setter) visiting Tokyo today has other subjects for meditation than the aesthetic contrast between old and new. Japan is a small country geographically, but the first impression of a visitor will be its vastness. The huge city of Tokyo will engulf him, with its hurrying crowds, its rich department stores and its quantities of small restaurants and bars. Something he will hardly have avoided learning in his own country will be Japan's commercial and industrial strength, its mastery of advanced technologies and its ability to apply the discoveries of science. Perhaps he will be taken to see robots making other robots. Then he will note the extraordinary difficulty of finding somewhere to live in Tokyo, and learn that the kind of house or flat normally expected by the middle classes in London or Paris is the mark of a very rich man in Japan. To him, it will seem that there is an amazing contrast between the statistical standard of living in Japan and the real rewards received by the average Japanese for the vast effort made to ensure the country's industrial supremacy. But when he comes to ask himself what are the sources of Japan's apparent social solidarity and what are the strains with which economic growth on this scale must threaten it, then the future will remain as hidden to him as it was to Kipling. Certainly, after a long period during which Japan's role on the international stage was curtained by the existence of its alliance with the United States, it is now about to play once again a considerable part in world affairs. The curtain has gone up, but few can foresee the nature of the performance.

At any rate, we can conclude that, in Europe, we have every reason to get to know Japan and its people better. Its economic power is affecting us already. In London no less than three museums and galleries have received massive gifts from Japanese donors. Our universities have also had their share. Subsidiaries of Japanese industry are springing up all over Britain. The Westernisation of the Meiji era is being repaid in kind. We have reason to be curious about the means through which such an astounding success story was brought about. We have reason to wish to know something about the culture that is its foundation.

Moreover, if relations between Japan and European countries are to thrive, then they must not remain a mere process of haggling over trade. They must become cultural relations in the widest sense of the term, in which each side has a positive and fructifying effect on the other. It is with this in mind and as a small part of the wider effort that is now beginning, that ENCOUNTER has produced its Japanese number.

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LETTERS

The Idea of '68

I READ Melvin J. Lasky's article on "The Ideas of '68" (in the November issue of ENCOUNTER). I find it superb, and both stimulating and sad.

What I find so extraordinary is that, ultimately, these events left no trace whatever; meaning that not only has there been no lasting after-effect, but also that subsequent events would probably have happened, just as well and just as much, if '68 had not occurred. Considering the noise and the universality of the events, it is amazing how completely they vanished into thin air.

PAUL HIRSCH

Buenos Aires

The Disinvitation of Nolte

THE ARTICLE by George Watson, "The Disinvitation of Nolte" (ENCOUNTER, January 1989), quotes Mark Almond's allegation that "the only colleague to object strongly to his invitation was one who had not read his books". Mr Almond's statement is false.

I am "the only colleague" (that is, the only Fellow of Wolfson College) referred to. I hope, therefore, that you will allow me to put the matter right.

When I heard that Professor Nolte was among those proposed for the Wolfson series on Revolution, I explained to Mr Almond—a Junior Research Fellow who acted as convener for the series—the reasons why it seemed to me wrong to include this name in the final list. I did so, assuming that, in accordance with college regulations, no formal invitation had been issued.

First, I pointed out Professor Nolte's sloppy logic, apparent in his discussion of Hitler's policy of racial extermination—a weakness which has also been shown up by various distinguished German historians. Secondly, I told Mr Almond of the many young German students who came to see me in 1986 when I was the guest of Heidelberg University, on the occasion of my receiving the title of Honorary Senator; they expressed their strong indignation at Professor Nolte's articles in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, in which Hitler's policy of extermination is explained as an understandable reaction to the *"Vernichtungsvorgänge"* of the Bolshevik revolution. Mr Almond could not be in any doubt that these much discussed articles by Professor Nolte, now available in the volume *Historikerstreit* (Piper, 1987), were relevant in this discussion, and not his books with which I was of course also acquainted. In particular, I referred him to the article which initiated the controversy in Germany, namely "Between Legendary History and Revisionism? The Third Reich from the Perspective of the Year 1980".

Finally, I tried to make Mr Almond realise what impression an invitation to Professor Nolte to lecture at Wolfson College would make on (*a*) those young Germans indignant at this attempt to relativise the horror of Hitler's extermination camps in their gruesome efficiency and (*b*) those people whose close relatives and friends perished in these camps. (Later on, Mr Almond was quoted as believing that the objection to this invitation was based on the fear of losing possible Jewish donations to our College Appeal.) At the end of our conversation Mr Almond gave no reply of any kind, nor did he indicate to me at any later stage to what extent he had committed himself.

The talk of "disinvitation" in press reports and the charge of "pusillanimity" which Mr Watson levels at Wolfson College are alas, characteristic of those writers who disregard the first duty of an historian, that of checking the facts.

RAYMOND KLIBANSKY

Wolfson College
Oxford

PROFESSOR KLIBANSKY'S assurance that he has read Ernst Nolte's books is welcome, and I apologise if I was misinformed about the extent of his reading. That makes his misunderstanding harder to fathom. He must know that his reply, which concerns reasons why he and others disagree with Nolte's alleged views about Hitler's debt to Marxism—"indignant" Germans and friends of the victims—can only confirm the world in its reasonable belief that the cancelling of the lecture by Wolfson College was an illiberal act, its declared motive being a disagreement with the lecturer's opinions. That is ayatollah-logic. Universities are universal institutions; they have a duty to give platforms to views objectionable and palatable alike. If not here, then where?

His point about an alleged attempt to "relativise" the horror of Hitler's extermination camps deserves a more specific answer and suggests a deeper misapprehension. Crimes are no less crimes for being compared with others, nor need such comparisons weaken any sense of outrage. A murderer is none the less guilty because there have been other murders; and to conclude of some given murder that it was unique is to compare it with other instances, not to refuse to compare it. In fact, if comparisons with other instances were impossible, then the question of whether it was unique or not could not even arise.

The Soviet use of Buchenwald and Sachsenhausen as extermination camps in 1945-50 is an example: the Communist camps may have been deadlier than in Nazi times, in percentage terms, even though they employed different methods. I fully accept that Hitler's mass-murder programme was unique, and would expect Professor Nolte to do so too. That does not alter the fact that it was not the only genocidal programme in this century, and it does not forbid us to consider Hitler's avowed debt to the theory and practice of Communism, or the subsequent debt of Communism to Hitler.

GEORGE WATSON

St John's College
Cambridge

Encounter with Djilas in Budapest

YOU WILL HAVE NOTED from the world press that an extra dimension has recently been added to the already broadening and deepening discussion in Hungary. But you may not be aware what an important role that you at ENCOUNTER, with your articles, documents, and special brochures have been playing in this revolutionary effervescence! I should like to report briefly about this matter, recording just the plain facts.

And don't hesitate to publish the letter! It is a long time since anybody around here has been "embarrassed" or "sensitive" about the Western sources of information and ideas—where else are they to come from? From Comrade Deng in Peiping or Dr Raisa Gorbachov in Moscow? Or General Jaruzelski behind his dark glasses in Warsaw, or Erich Honecker behind the Wall in East Berlin. . . ?

FIRST AND FOREMOST, there has been the enormous impact in Hungary over the last half-year of the Milovan Djilas text which you published in ENCOUNTER (September-October and November 1988) and as a special pamphlet (No. 18). The long conversation conducted by George Urban, who has himself recently visited Budapest, has been translated in full into Hungarian. Its first instalment appeared in a new fortnightly independent journal, called *Hitel*, which began publication last November as one of the papers of the newly-organised opposition parties and organisations. It is licensed, and repre-

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sents principally the Hungarian Democratic Forum (a populist-radical body, its main strength drawn from the Writers Union). The president of its Editorial Board is the well-known writer Sandor Csoori; the chief editor is Zoltan Biro.

The Djilas text has been carried as the lead article in all five numbers of *Hitel*. Naturally, ENCOUNTER is given credit; and the excellent translation (by Laura Szalma and Zuzanna Vara) has been done *complete*, without any cuts whatsoever. May I add that the circulation of *Hitel* started with 10,000 copies; but it is now selling more than 80,000! The rise is attributable, partly at least, to the veritable sensation created by the first Djilas-Urban instalments.

ONE OTHER THING. The debates have been increasingly stormy amongst us over the nature of the famous events in our country in 1956. The factions with different viewpoints continue to proliferate even in the Central Committee of the Hungarian Communist Party, which is traditionally the last place that truth's dawning light reaches. The classic historical documentary on *The Hungarian Revolution*, by Melvin J. Lasky, which was published in the 1950s and translated into many European languages, is still not available here. And you are probably aware that copies have several times been confiscated by the official customs police. Still, we don't really have to re-translate our own history into Hungarian!

But we don't yet *have* our own history. What passes for analysis in official circles is a kind of Marxoid-Stalinite gobbledegook which, as always, tosses agitprop phrases around ("old feudal classes . . . bourgeois restoration . . . Mindzenty . . . imperialism") instead of concentrating on historical facts and documented details. We note that Lasky dedicated his book in 1957:

> "To the writers, poets, scholars and intellectuals of Hungary, who will one day write their own history. . . ."

Let me just say for now: we're working on it!

SANDOR VARGA

Budapest

The Theory of Social Hypnosis

The Spell of Stalin (& Hitler) —By JOHN L. MCCALLISTER

AMONG the stimulating and thought-provoking remarks made by Milovan Djilas to George Urban (ENCOUNTER, September-October 1988) is the concession to the effect that, despite all the legitimate anti-Communism of the anti-Stalinists in the 1930s, and after, there was in the Stalin system "a certain dynamism and coherence" (p. 19). What abstract and bloodless words! But they would seem to be true, and especially if one listens to the undertone of certain *Glasnost* confessions by Johnny-come-lately anti-Stalinists in the Gorbachov crowd.

For example, I was very much struck by the article of one Soviet historian (Natan Eidelman, *Moscow News*, no. 30, 1988) in which he takes up the questions previously raised by Stalin critics Igor Shafarevich and Roy Medvedev. He tries to explain to young people "how their fathers and grandfathers could have believed and rejoiced in the Great Leader. . . ." Were they all fools and/or scoundrels?

> "The question of all questions is: if Stalin is one of the most sinister tyrants, why did millions of people (including fine politicians, scholars and writers) hosannah him for decades?"

Stalin's apparatus accounted for some 2-3% of the population—what of the other 97-98%? Why, and how, could they believe that "life was getting better and better" when it was getting sadder?

Natan Eidelman's answer is a sincere, if very vague, concept of living under "a special hypnotic spell". Stalin as Svengali—laughably grotesque, if there were not so much evidence that apparently supports it. The Soviet historian refines his question to: "How could 'nationwide love for the Great Leader' grow stronger in conditions of mass terror?" An hypnosis-induced excuse for the extermination of innocent people? "Millions enthusiastically *approved* of the bloodshed, and only the bravest people said nothing—thus the bloodshed increased the power of Stalin's spell."

Nor does he excuse himself. He is candidly autobiographical:

> ". . . I think of my father who did not like Stalin and ridiculed the idealising of Stalin. He didn't believe the political accusations of 1937 but considered them the price for the struggle against fascism. He believed that life would really become 'better and merrier'. . . . When he realised that wasn't the case, he couldn't keep quiet and soon was sent to a camp . . . Were Stalin and his gang such talented hypnotists that they were able to cast a spell over the entire nation? . . . Our great country has taken decades to come out of this hypnotic trance. They usually idealise their former behaviour. They can't explain why they approved or accused: why they were happy in their way (myself included)."

What I find especially notable about this commentary—and, if followed up, it should lead to the conversion of all those abominable old political-psychiatric clinics into new intellectual institutes for the study of Stalinist political psychiatry—is its reference to a similar hypnotic trance which would bear a study of its own in comparative totalitarianism.

Soviet historians sometimes point, in their explanations of Stalinist *malaise*, to the relative backwardness (and even illiteracy) in the Russian past. But, as Eidelman argues, "there have been instances of social hypnosis in more developed countries too, as in Germany from 1933 to 1945".

In Germany today, at least among its intellectuals, this is a forbidden subject. Any German historian who raises the matter of similarities and differences between Hitlerism and Stalinism gets accused of trying to whitewash the Nazi régime. He stands condemned as an apologist who is trying to evade the "singularity" of German guilt (as if the outraged intellectuals were all walking around in sackcloth-and-ashes for the murdered victims all these post-War years!). This is the centre of the controversy around Professor Ernst Nolte and the so-called *Historiker-Streit*.

Now the question—and it is good that history always comes up with such ironies—has been raised from the Soviet side, it will presumably become legitimate to compare Hitlerism and Stalinism. Hypnotics of the world unite! you have nothing to lose but your spells. . . .

JOHN L. MCCALLISTER

Cambridge

Art at the Tate

DENYS SUTTON (ENCOUNTER, January 1989) makes a number of remarks about the Tate Gallery which, while purporting to comment on my plans for the Gallery, are rather vehicles for his own prejudice. The architecture and volumes of the central Duveen galleries at the Tate have been denied for nearly thirty years. My wish is simply to restore the original scale of the rooms and to give them over to their original purpose—the exhibition of sculpture, both

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modern and contemporary, including the large sculptural installations that artists of international standing like Beuys, Long and Serra have made during the past twenty years.

Nor am I "keen to make my mark", as he puts it, by my "own concept of hanging". I am keen to show the full range of British Art, rather than placing much of the 20th century in basement galleries, though this will be difficult to achieve given my desire to show achievement in depth, rather than simply hanging one of everything. May I add that my remark about Constable, taken out of context, was made with the opposite intention to that which Mr Sutton infers. Constable is one of our great painters and, like Turner in the Clore (also "at the edge of the site"), deserves to be seen as such.

Finally, I have never suggested that I want to make the gallery "livelier, more spectacular than the existing Tate"; that was the wish of a journalist. My own hope is that as the Tate evolves it will find ways of encouraging visitors to look even more closely at the great works within its galleries and to emerge on to Millbank with a greater understanding and curiosity about the art of the present, as well as that of the past.

NICHOLAS SEROTA
Director
The Tate Gallery

AUTHORS

Akemi Horie studied with Jan Kott at the University of California, Berkeley, for a Ph.D. degree in Dramatic Art. She worked as director and actress in the USA and Japan before coming to the UK, where her most recent work has been Paul Barker's opera *The Pillow Song*, produced last June. She directs his new opera *La Malinche* in June for the 1989 London International Opera Festival, and is also preparing a theatre projects based on the *Noh*. A lecturer at the School of Oriental and African Studies University of London, she is currently writing a book on the folk religious origins of the Kabuki Theatre.

Brian Moeran was appointed to the Chair of Japanese Studies at the University of London in 1986. An anthropologist by profession, he has written extensively on Japanese society and culture. His books include *Okubo Diary: Portrait of a Japanese Valley* (1985) and *Language and Popular Culture in Japan* (Manchester University Press, 1989).

Yasunari Takahashi is Professor of English and Drama at Tokyo University. His previous contribution to ENCOUNTER, "The Theatre of Mind", appeared in April 1982.

Graeme Wilson recently published the third and concluding volume of his translation from the Japanese of Natsume Soseki's *I am a Cat* (Tuttle, Tokyo and Vermont). His "Corinthian Poem" appeared in the June 1988 ENCOUNTER.

Irving Louis Horowitz is Hannah Arendt Distinguished Professor of Sociology and Political Science at Rutgers University, and editor-in-chief of Transaction Books. His recent books include a biography of C. Wright Mills, *An American Utopian*; and a collection of his own writings on politics, *Winners and Losers: Social and Political Polarities in America*.

Roy Kerridge is the author of *Druid Madonna* (1983); his non-fiction work about West Indians in England, *Real Wicked Guy*, was followed by *Bizarre Britain: A Calendar of Eccentricity* (1984), and *The People of Britain* (Robert Hale, 1987). His latest book, *In the Deep South*, has just been published by Michael Joseph.

Jean-François Revel, the French philosopher and critic, writes a regular column for *Le Point* in Paris. His most recently translated work, *How Democracies Perish*, was published in 1985 by Weidenfeld (London) and Doubleday (New York).

I. S. Gillespie, whose doctoral thesis dealt with Wagner and the political manipulation of myth, is an Honorary Research Fellow of the University of Manchester and author of *Old Wives' Tales*, a work on the Nigerian transition from paganism to mission-culture (Routledge, 1970); *Return to the Old Gods,* the current project, will include this article on Mishima and studies of Robert Graves, Wole Soyinka, and Richard Wagner.

Vernon Bogdanor, Fellow of Brasenose College, Oxford, is the author of many books, including *Changing British and American Party Systems* (1984) and *What is Proportional Representation?* (1984), and editor of *Representatives of the People?* (1986), and *The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Political Institutions* (1987). His latest book, *Constitutions in Democratic Politics*, was published in 1988 by Gower. His articles in ENCOUNTER include "Disproving Darwin?" (November 1987) and "Arabs & Jews in Palestine" (June 1988).

Charles Issawi, Professor Emeritus of Princeton University, was born in Cairo, and educated at Magdalen College, Oxford. He has taught at Columbia University, New York University, and the American University of Beirut, and also served in the Ministry of Finance and Central Bank, Cairo, and the United Nations Secretariat. The author of numerous books on the economics and economic history of the Middle East, his other works include *The Arab Legacy* (1981) and *Issawi's Laws of Social Motion* (1973).

Anna Adams's collections of poetry are *Dear Vincent* (Littlewood Press, 1986), *Trees in Sheep County* (Peterloo Poets, 1987) and, most recently, *Angels of Soho* (Royal Academy, 1988).

E. B. Greenwood is Senior Lecturer in English and American Literature at the University of Kent. His book *Tolstoy: The Comprehensive Vision*, published in 1975 by J. M. Dent, was reprinted in 1980 in Methuen University Paperbacks.

Herbert Passin, Emeritus Professor of Sociology at Columbia University is Senior Adviser to the Aspen Institute of Humanistic Studies, and a consultant to Kleinwort Benson International. He has written numerous books in both Japanese and English. In 1985 he received the Imperial Order of the Sacred Treasure from the Japanese Government.

Paul Coates, an English film critic, is a lecturer on film in the Department of English at McGill University. He read German and Polish at Cambridge, and then completed a Ph.D. on Polish literature at the University of Warsaw. His essays on film have been collected in *The Story of the Lost Reflection* (Verso/Schocken Books, 1986). He has also written a study of modern fiction, *The Realist Fantasy* (1985), and a study of the Polish Symbolist Boleslaw Leśmian, written in Polish and published in Warsaw in 1986. His previous contribution to ENCOUNTER was "A Ghetto in Babel", a review of Claude Lanzmann's film *Shoah* (June 1987).

Malcolm Rutherford is Assistant Editor of the *Financial Times*.

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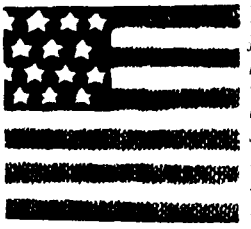
Life & Letters Today

London



INCOLUMI GRAVITATE? *There was a feeling among British commentators [writes Craig Brown] that Mr George Bush was a little too scholarly, a little too serious, to occupy such an inherently jocular post as President of the United States of America. But a short exchange with David Frost on TV-am during his Presidential campaign, must have convinced many doubters that he has sufficient deposits of ignorance to draw upon when times get rough.*

"Do you not think", *asked Frost,* **"that Lloyd Bentsen has more gravitas than Dan Quayle?"**

"Gravitas . . . gravitas . . . er", *replied Bush. His smile seemed to falter. Not recognising the word, his mind was obviously racing through the possible meanings, terrified lest Frost should have come up with conclusive evidence against his running mate. Did Quayle cheat and use Oxo cubes when preparing a gravitas? Were there dangerous potholes in the drive of the Quayle mansion because it hadn't been properly gravitased? How Mr Bush must have quaked!* **"I studied Latin for several years"**, *he eventually admitted to Frost.* **"But, er, gravitas . . . could you tell me what you mean by gravitas?"**

Frost politely explained that by **"gravitas"** *he meant* **"weight, seriousness".**

"Ah!" *beamed Bush, visibly relieved that this was all that was wrong with Quayle. He then added,* **"gravitas, gravitas!"**, *as if to prove that his strengths as President would indeed be declining.*

THE TIMES

Berne

EVERY BIT HELPS: **The crisis in the falling sales of Emmenthal cheese is to be counteracted. The Swiss cheese industry has announced that it will be producing a new variety called "Savourans", and it will have smaller holes.**

REUTER

London

HARD TIMES: *In the United States a new disease that is afflicting the wealthy has been termed "affluenza"—a psychological disturbance arising from an excess of wealth.*

Other exotic diseases have emerged in recent years. "Jazz ballet bottom" is a little-known but painful consequence of jazz dancing, identified by Cambridge doctors, who found that exercises involving sitting on the floor can cause abscesses on the buttocks.

"Economy class syndrome" is a tendency to develop blood clots, which can cause heart attacks, as a result of sitting in cramped aircraft seats. First class passengers apparently do not suffer from it.

EVENING STANDARD

New York City

IMAGE POWER: **A glance at the New York phone book reveals more than a column of listings that begin with the word "Image".**

"Image Assemblers, Image Builders, Image Communications, Image Consultants . . . Image Crafters, Image Creators . . . Image O'Youth."

That's just a partial list, in just one town. This is an entire new industry. Sprouting across America are grooming gurus, colour consultants, speech enhancers and handshake analysts. These makeover artists work for fees that range from large ($300 per person for group seminars) to colossal ($5,000 a day for corporate programmes).

The urge to have a retooled, enhanced and upgraded persona is rampant among Americans. Last year, a record 125,000 people signed up just for courses in public speaking, sales training and customer relations; at least a million people each year enlist the services of image enhancers of one sort of another.

A firm handshake, an unrelenting smile, a memory for first names, and you're well on your way to realising the American dream of the 1980s, being first among equals.

INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE

Swindon

GODLY CREATURES: *The booksellers W. H. Smith's new computer, christened "Bookfinder", was being shown off at the company's Swindon offices when it was asked to find a book with the word* **"cat"** *or* **"dog"** *in its title. The machine excelled.* **"Catholic Dogma"**, *it suggested.*

DAILY TELEGRAPH

London

COMMA THERAPY: **The answer to long life and happiness? It might depend on the way you speak, according to Dr James Lynch.**

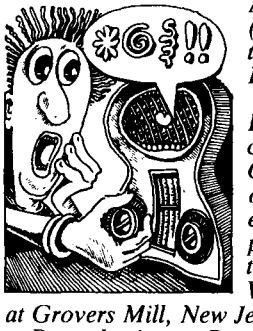
He doesn't mean that you'll live to 100 if you speak BBC English or sound as if you belong in the Royal Shakespeare Company. His prescription involves slowing it down and "thinking commas"—yes, that's right, commas.

Dr Lynch is professor of psychiatry at the University of Maryland, Baltimore. His work is outlined by Claire Safran in "New Ways To Lower Your Blood Pressure". The advice could change the lifestyle of hundreds of thousands of people at risk from high blood pressure.

He found that people with high blood pressure speak more rapidly than other people. Slowing down can help people give up blood pressure pills. So can "comma therapy" —thinking of the spoken word like the written word.

DAILY MAIL

London



ALIENS? *First, it was the Americans (but that was 50 years ago). Then, the Portuguese. And now, even the Danes have succumbed.*

When the local radio station in the Portuguese town of Braga broadcast a 50th anniversary re-creation of Orson Welles' famous radio version of ***War of the Worlds*** *at the weekend, residents fled their homes in panic. On this occasion, the Martians were said to have landed on Vila Verde, near Braga, rather than at Grovers Mill, New Jersey.*

Recently, it was Denmark's turn. Listeners jammed the switchboard at Danish Radio, after aliens were said to have invaded the country. Danish Radio described the broadcast—which included the voice of one of the station's regular newsreaders—as a "serious error".

To the team of Wells and Welles, congratulations. A coup from beyond the grave.

THE INDEPENDENT

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IMPORTANT PHILOSOPHY

Nietzsche's New Seas

Explorations in Philosophy, Aesthetics, and Politics
Edited by
MICHAEL ALLEN GILLESPIE and TRACY B. STRONG

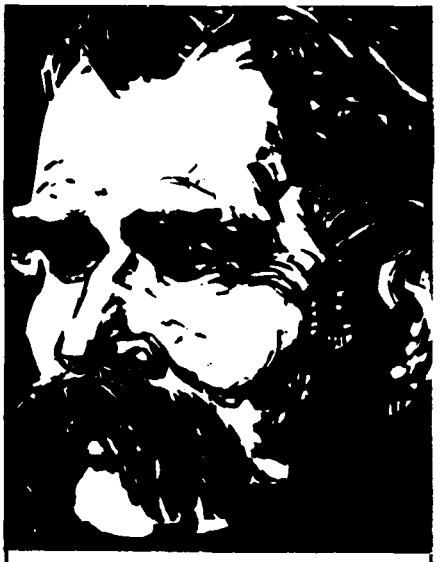
Here scholars from Germany, France, and United States—from different disciplines and different methodological and ideological schools of thought—make a new approach to Nietzsche. Their unifying theme is that the meaning of what the philosopher says is best understood by coming to terms with the way he says it. "The volume's theoretical significance lies in the creation of a necessary and important bridge between French deconstructionist approaches to Nietzsche and the traditional hermeneutical approaches inspired by Heidegger....A stimulating, dynamic experience for the reader." —Ofelia Schutte, University of Florida

Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit

A Commentary Based on the Preface and Introduction
WERNER MARX
Translated by **Peter Heath**

Marx examines what many consider to be the most difficult of all philosophical texts by elucidating the objectives Hegel set forth in the Preface and Introduction to his *Phenomenology of Spirit*. "Philosophy at its best can rise above ...provincialism—as it does for instance in the marvellously 'Anglo-Saxon' little book of the European Werner Marx." —*Owl of Minerva* *

*Available in paperback



The Importance of Nietzsche

Ten Essays
ERICH HELLER

A distinguished scholar of German culture considers Nietzsche in relation to Goethe, Rilke, Wittgenstein, Yeats, and others. Heller thus shows that, although Nietzsche prided himself on breaking with all traditional ways of thinking and feeling, he was nevertheless ambivalent toward the tradition he inherited. In his cogent account, Heller argues Nietzsche's continuity with the cultural story and reveals his importance for those seeking to understand the wellsprings of the epoch's disquiet, turmoil, *and* creativity.*

Illustration of Friedrich Nietzsche by David Lunn, from the cover of *Joyful Wisdom* by Friedrich Nietzsche. Reprinted by permission of the Ungar Publishing Company.

Deconstruction and Philosophy

The Texts of Jacques Derrida
Edited by JOHN SALLIS

This collection of essays by twelve leading Derridean philosophers is the first sustained effort to relate Derrida to the entire Western philosophical tradition from Plato to Heidegger. The volume also includes an essay by Derrida himself, published for the first time in English, which takes up the question of the human hand and its relation to language, extending his engagement with Heidegger on the subject of ontological and sexual difference.*

The Critique of Pure Modernity

Hegel, Heidegger, and After
DAVID KOLB

"David Kolb has written a splendid book: serious, scholarly, and illuminating. It contains as pointed and valuable an account of Hegel's *Logic* as has appeared in English. His interest is in the problem of modernity, a problem he shows to be at the centre of both Hegel's and Heidegger's endeavours. The governing strategy that both Hegel and Heidegger deploy in thinking about modernity is to refuse 'to take as final the categories of modernity's self-description.' Kolb's presentation of these refusals is executed with clarity, cogency, and as much simplicity as the subject allows." —J.M. Bernstein, *Bulletin of the Hegel Society of Great Britain* *

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